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VOL. I

1754-1765

SHUJA-UD-DAULAH

(A Thesis approved for the Degree of Doctor of Letters by the Agra University in 1938)

VOLUME I

1754–1765

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this book was sold out within ten years of its publication. For the last ten years it has been out of print, and in great demand. But on account of the author's pre-occupations the present edition has been considerably delayed. In this edition the work has been revised thoroughly, several mistakes of the first edition have been corrected and the spellings of place names modernised. In spite of a quest, very little fresh material, namely, Yadgar-e-Bahaduri, a rare Persian MS and the later fifteen volumes of the S. P. D., could be discovered, and, therefore, in this edition the work is practically the same as it was in the first edition. It is hoped that Shuja-ud-daulah Vol. I will be found useful in its new garb.

ASHIRBADI LAL SRIVASTAVA

PREFACE

This volume, being the second of the series that I began ten years ago, covers eleven eventful years (1754-1765) of our country's history and besides narrating the first half of the life-story of Shuja-ud-daulah describes in detail the circumstances that paved the way for the British expansion over the Mughal provinces of Allahabad and Awadh. To the hero (Shuja-ud-daulah) belongs the credit of being the first patriotic Indian prince to throw a bold and open challenge to the English in Bengal, commanding them to revert to their original profession of trade, and to take up a vigorous offensive to drive them out of the land. The consequent struggle culminating in his overthrow and submission, though not without many a brave and desperate stand, and the causes leading to them are among the prominent topics discussed here for the first time on the basis of contemporary sources. The importance of a critical study of this transitional period and the causes of our ignorance, backwardness and political discord, so cleverly taken advantage of by the British traders, can hardly be over-emphasised.

The sources for a history of Shuja-ud-daulah and his times, specially from the commencement of his relations with the English East India Company, are copious and diverse and found mainly in Persian and Marathi, English and French, besides Urdu and Hindi. Thanks to the party politics of W. Hastings' time, every act of Shuja-ud-daulah's administration and every bit of information about his character (dragged to light by his political opponents) is at the disposal of the historian. It has been my endeavour to collect all this copious material from the Persian MS libraries, from the Imperial Records Department of India and from printed documents and chronicles in English, Marathi and French.

I have tried to avoid unnecessary discussion and dissertation which take away half the joy of reading history, and have condensed thousands of pages of matter in this small volume. It is needless for me to add that nationalistic bias, and fear or favour of any individual, institution or Government have not deflected me from my chosen path of impartiality in judging and narrating historical events. It is, however, for my readers to judge whether this is a mere boast. I am painfully aware of some of the imperfections of this work, including inconsis-

tency in the spelling of some of the proper names and printing errors, and for these I crave the indulgence of the reader.

I am thankful to the authorities of the MS libraries in Northern India and the Government of India for permitting me (1935-36) to inspect and make use of their records. I cannot place this book before the public without acknowledging the heavy debt I owe to my revered grand-guru Sir Jadunath Sarkar. While my Alma Mater (the Lucknow University) has so far done absolutely nothing to encourage research in Awadh history, Sir Jadunath's patronage of it has been continuous and plentiful. He again took me in his house at Darjiling (May 1934), as a member of his family, placed all his Persian MSS and books of reference at my disposal and promptly gave me his valuable advice and help whenever they were sought. He has very kindly seen the book through the press and corrected the proofs at the cost of his precious time. The authorities of the Midland Press, Calcutta, deserve my thanks for bringing it out within so short a time. The Kamshet History Week Fund has very generously paid a subsidy in aid of this publication.

Lucknow, ASHIRBADI LAL SRIVASTAVA
25th of May, 1939.

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chapter One

Early Life and Training

1. Birth and Childhood

Mirza Jalal-ud-din Haidar better known by the title of Shuja-ud-daulah, was born in the mansion of Dara-Shukoh in the imperial City of Delhi (Shahjahanabad) on or about Sunday the 22nd of Rajjab,[1] 1144 A. H., corresponding to the 19th of January (New style), 1732 A. D. The first born and the only child of his parents—the future Nawab Abulmansur Khan Safdar Jang and his high-spirited and talented consort Sadr-un-nisa Begum—he was also the eldest grand-child of Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, then Governor of the opulent province of Awadh and in the run for a ministership at the imperial Court of Delhi. His birth was made the occasion of an unusual round of festivities and rejoicing, and Saadat Khan grudged no expenditure to make it truly memorable.

Darling of the whole family, the childhood of Mirza Jalal-ud-din Haidar, from his infancy to his eighth birthday passed under the loving supervision and fostering care of his maternal grandfather, Saadat Khan. His only son having died in his infancy, the venerable Khan, who was over fifty-two years of age, had despaired of getting another son and heir. Accordingly, he had a few years before invited his sister's son, Mirza

All those historians who have cared to record the date of Shuja-ud-daulah's birth say that he was born in 1144 A. H. Haricharan (see Chahar-Gulzar-i-Shujai, p. 518 b), adds that he died at the age of 44 years, 4 months (of course lunar). This would make 22nd Rajjab, 1144 H. as the date of his birth, for he died on 22nd Zi-Qaad, 1188 H.

Muhammad Muqim (who became ennobled as Abul-mansur Khan Safdar Jang), from Khurasan, given him the hand of his eldest daughter, Sadrunnisa, and nominated him his heir and Deputy Governor of Awadh. Having left the care of the internal administration of Awadh to Safdar Jang, Saadat Khan had made the welfare of his family (wives, daughters and grandson), and the wider field of imperial politics of the Delhi Court his special concern.

2. Education and Boyhood

If the traditional Indian practice,[1] prevalent among the Hindus and Muslims alike had been followed in this case, Jalal-ud-din Haidar's school-going ceremony (Rasm-i-Maktab) must have taken place in his fifth year. Tutors were evidently appointed now to teach him the three R's. The names of three of them are incidentally recorded in the pages of Sayyid Ghulam Husain Khan's celebrated work, the Sair-ul-mutakherin.[2] When Jalal-ud-din Haidar approached his twentieth year Shaikh Muhammad Husain a distinguished scholar from Persia, was appointed to supervise his education. The Shaikh appears to have discharged his duties for a short time only. Safdar Jang's death having occurred soon after, and the Shaikh's youthful ward not being inclined to theological studies, he became indifferent to the learned tutor.[3] Perforce the aged scholar quitted Awadh for Patna, where after having experienced the ups and downs of fortune, he died about the year 1762.

Although rather a 'naughty boy' from the school-master's point of view, Mirza Jalal-ud-din Haidar was exceptionally intelligent and it can be readily believed that he easily picked up what was taught him by his teachers.

Ghazi-ud-din Khan Imad-ul-mulk, who was an exact contemporary of Shuja-ud-daulah, was formally sent to school at the age of 4 years, 4 months and 4 days (see Tarikhi-Imad-ul-mulk by Ghulam Qadir Khan Jayasi, p. 6 a).

Sair, Persian Text, p. 878.

For an account of the life of the Shaikh see the Sair, pp. 516-17.

In course of time he acquired mastery over Persian, Arabic, Turki and Hindustani. We are informed by a contemporary historian of standard authority that he learnt Hindi, and Marathi, and something of English as well.[1] This statement does not amount, in all probability, to more than that he picked up some English words of common use during his close association with the English subsequent to the battle of Baksar (1764). He was given lessons in Mathematics and acquired a good knowledge of that science. The fine arts were not neglected. The young Mirza cultivated a good hand-writing and became proficient in music.[2] We have it on the testimony of no less a person than Warren Hastings that he (Shuja-ud-daulah) possessed "a very clear and easy elocution and an uncommonly quick apprehension."[3] These virtues must have been due partly to natural gifts and partly to good education and careful breeding in his boyhood. The Mirza was endowed with a stout body and robust constitution, and had inherited his grandfather's inflexible courage, physical strength, reckless bravery and disregard of personal danger. He learnt swimming, wrestling, riding, archery, shooting a gun, lance-fighting, swordsmanship and other arts of warfare. Specially did he become an adept in archery and lance-fighting.[4] Although sensual pleasures became his absorbing passion in the prime of his life, his personal bravery and soldierly talents prevented his dominion from falling a prey to the aggressions of turbulent vassals and greedy, warlike neighbours.[5]

Hardly had Mirza Jalal-ud-din entered on his eighth year when his grandfather died at Delhi, on 19th March, 1739, and his father Safdar Jang succeeded him as Governor of Awadh. Mughal offices having by then become hereditary in practice, the young Mirza of seven became virtually the heir to the flourish-

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1 Haricharan, 518 b.
2 Haricharan, 518 b.
3 Quoted in Hastings and the Rohilla War by Sir John Strachey, p. 93 n.
4 Haricharan, 518 a, and b ; Maadan, IV, 258 b.
5 Sair, III 895.

ing *Subahdari*. Towards the end of November, 1743, Safdar Jang accompanied by Jalal-ud-din Haidar repaired to Delhi in obedience to the imperial summons and interviewed Muhammad Shah on the 27th of that month. Of the two powerful and rival factions, the Turani and the Irani, which were contending for supremacy at the Court, the Emperor was in those days favourably inclined towards the latter, and Safdar Jang, being a powerful and promising member of this party, was raised by imperial commands to the important post of Superintendent of the Imperial Artillery (*Mir Atish*) on 21st March, 1744, as a counterpoise against Qamar-ud-din Khan the Wazir and his Central Asian colleagues.

Entrusted as Safdar Jang was with the paramount duties of the protection of the persons of the Emperor and his family and of keeping the imperial palace-fort in defensive order, he took up his residence[1] inside it and came into close personal touch with Muhammad Shah. He rose fast in imperial favour, and Mirza Jalal-ud-din Haidar, a boy of twelve, got admittance into the Court and began frequenting it now and then to pay his respects to the Sovereign.

In his old age Muhammad Shah had imbibed a great liking for children. Specially did he become fond of Mirza Muhammad, eldest son of Ishaq Khan Mutman-ud-daulah. Contrary to imperial practice, he sometimes seated Mirza Muhammad, when the latter was a child, on the throne beside himself, as if he were a prince of blood-royal. The aged Emperor would even remark, "Had not Muhammad Ishaq Khan left Mirza Muhammad behind, I do not know how I would have survived him." He cherished affectionate feelings for the other two sons of Mutman-ud-daulah, namely Mirza Ali Khan and Mirza Muhammad Ali Salar Jang[2] also. Jalal-ud-din Haidar was at this time 12 or 13 years old, almost of the same age as the younger brothers of Mirza Muhammad, and he used to go to Court with his father. Certain it is that the Emperor became

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1 My First Two Nawabs of Awadh, p. 106.
2 Sair, III, 847 ; Maadan, IV, 148, b.

pleased with his noble bearing, and that was one of the reasons why he negotiated a match between him and his favourite Mirza Muhammad's younger sister, the celebrated Bahu Begam who figured later as a tragic heroine in the speeches of Burke, Fox and Sheriden at the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

3. Marriage

Amir Khan Umdat-ul-mulk's influence with the Emperor being steadily on the wane, Muhammad Shah wished to draw the two remaining important Irani families into a closer alliance. With this object in view and with that of putting Mirza Muhammad, since ennobled as Ishaq Khan Najm-ud-daulah, socially on a par with Umdat-ul-mulk, the proud leader of the Irani party, he persuaded Safdar Jang to accept Bahu Begam's hand for his son Mirza Jalal-ud-din Haidar, the future Shuja-ud-daulah of Awadh. Muhammad Shah adopted this young lady as his daughter and resolved to give her away in marriage on his behalf.

The wedding was celebrated in Delhi with great *eclat* towards the end[1] of 1745. The bridegroom was about to complete his fourteenth year and bride was, in all likelihood, a year or two younger.

Safdar Jang spared no pains or money to make the occasion go down to posterity as worthy of remembrance. He provided the bridegroom's gifts to the bride (*Sachaq*) on a regal scale and sent them to the house of Najm-ud-daulah in a long procession of his friends and well-wishers. From the foot of the imperial fort to Kohtila Firoz Shah nothing was seen but trays full of various sorts of sweets, fruits, wearing apparel, ornaments and bottles of perfumed essence. Besides these, there were costly furniture and a large number of cups and dishes of various shapes and workmanship and silver vessels enamelled with gold, the latter, according to the author of the *Sair*, numbering one thousand and a few hundreds, and none of them costing less than a hundred rupees. Next day Najm-ud-daulah sent *Mahndi* to the bridegroom's house, which was even

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Sair, III, 858 ; Imad, 36.

more costly than the *Sachaq*. On both the occasions sumptuous feasts and grand entertainments were held. After the wedding Najm-ud-daulah gave a rich dowry to his sister. Safdar Jang distributed large sums in charity and held grand illuminations, the like of which had not been seen at any marriage except that of Jafar Khan, Wazir of Shah Jahan, or that of Emperor Farrukhsiyar.[1] If the author of the *Imad-us-Saadat* may be believed, forty-six lakhs of rupees were spent over this marriage, a sum that was not spent even at the wedding of Prince Dara Shukoh, the most costly marriage among those of the princes of the Mughal house.[2]

4. First Offices in Mughal Service

Safdar Jang's star was now in the ascendant and pluralities began to come thick upon him. Muhammad Shah died on the 25th April of 1748, and his son Ahmad Shah crowned himself three days later near the historic town of Panipat. Wazir Qamr-ud-din Khan's death having occurred a month and a week before his coronation, the new Emperor nominated Safdar Jang to the vacant office of the Chief Minister. On the 19th of June, 1748, a grand *Darbar* was held in the imperial fort at Delhi and Safdar Jang was formally installed as Wazir, loaded with rich gifts and promoted to the high rank of 8,000 *zat* and 8,000 *sawar*. In addition to this, he was given charge of the superintendentship of the Privy Council Chamber *(Ghusal-khana)*. A month even had not rolled by and the governorship of Ajmer and Faujdari of Narnol were further conferred on him ; but he exchanged Ajmer for the Allahabad province, then in charge of Zulfiqar Jang, the Imperial Paymaster General. On this very day, *i.e.*, 16th of July, 1748, Mirza Jalal-ud-din Haidar, who was but a boy of sixteen and a half years, was enrolled as a high *mansabdar* in the imperial service, ennobled with the title of Shuja-ud-daulah Bahadur and appointed the Head of the Department of Imperial Artillery[3] *(Mir Atish)*, a very responsi-

1 See my First Two Nawabs of Awadh, p. 113.
2 Imad, 36.
3 Delhi Chronicle, 39 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, 15 b.

ble post held by his father since March, 1744. By virtue of his office he must have taken up his residence inside the royal palace-fort and come into close personal touch with Emperor Ahmad Shah. But the responsibility and burden of the actual work of the office devolved upon Musawi Khan, Shuja-ud-daulah's assistant, while its policy and direction remained, as before, in Safdar Jang's hands.

Fortune smiled upon this young man, and the headship of the imperial artillery proved to be the stepping-stone to still higher honours. On the 3rd of August, 1750 Safdar Jang having been given leave to proceed on his first expedition against Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, Shuja-ud-daulah was appointed Deputy Wazir[1] the same day; with the privilege of officiating as Wazir during his father's absence from Delhi. This (Shuja-ud-daulah's officiating term as Wazir) proved to be a very short period, a little over two months only, and it is clear from the circumstantial evidence that Shuja-ud-daulah merely discharged the routine work of the high office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The inordinate ambition and vulgar greed of Javed Khan, the conscience-keeper of the weak-minded Emperor, had prevented even Safdar Jang from functioning as the real and *de facto* Wazir. Taking advantage of the latter's absence, the Khan intrigued hard against his son, and when the wild rumours of the defeat and death of Safdar Jang reached Delhi towards the end of September, 1750, he and his Turani friends began concerting measures to confiscate the Wazir's property, dismiss Shuja-ud-daulah and elevate Intizam-ud-daulah, son of the late Qamr-ud-din to the *wizarat*. Shuja-ud-daulah appeared to be in imminent danger of falling a prey to the machinations of his father's enemies. But he proved equal to the occasion. Exhorted by his wise mother, he collected 10,000 brave troops and made arrangements to stand boldly on the defence.[2] This disconcerted the plan of the plotters, and Shuja-ud-daulah continued in office till the return of his father.

1 Delhi Chronicle, 57.
2 Sair, III, 881 ; Imad, 50.

His next chance came in February,—1751, when Safdar Jang marched out of Delhi on his second expedition against the Pathans of the Doab. Shuja-ud-daulah again acted as Wazir[1] from 1st February, 1751, to 4th May, 1752. But this time, too he was the first minister of the realm in name only, all power having passed into the hands of the artful eunuch, Javed Khan, who became supreme at the Court owing to his boundless influence with Ahmad Shah and complete control over the Queen-mother Udham Bai. On his return to the capital Safdar Jang became so exasperated at the eunuch's usurpation that he had recourse to the most condemnable expedient of inviting him to a feast and getting him stabbed to death[2] in his own house on the 6th of September, 1752. Although ultimately productive of results utterly ruinous to the Wazir, the murder of his rival gave Safdar Jang at least temporarily full domination over the Emperor and his Court. Having first secured his hold over the royal fort by appointing one of his trusted captains, Abu Turab Khan, Commandant (*Qiladar*) of it, he proceeded to surround Ahmad Shah's person by his own creatures. A wholesale redistribution of offices at the Court now took place, and in this Shuja-ud-daulah was given the lion's share. In addition to his former offices of *Mir Atish* and *Naib Wazir*, he was invested on the 29th of September, 1752, with the robes of four more important posts, previously held by the Emperor's favourite Javed Khan, namely, command of the gentlemen troopers (*Ahdis*) superintendentship of the confirmation of appointments and grants (*arze-muqarrar*), command of the mace-bearers (*gurz-bardaran*) and charge of the sovereign's personal riding establishment[3] (*Jilau Khas*). But this was not all. Barely three months after this date the Emperor held Court and on the 1st January, 1753, appointed Shuja-ud-

1 Delhi Chronicle, 61.
2 T. Ahmad Shahi, 40 a-40 b ; Abdul Karim, 108 b-109 a ; T. M., 154 a ; Siar, 890 ; Delhi Chronicle, 73 ; Tabsir, 272 b ; Shakir, 71 ; Haricharan, 408 a ; Imad, 60.
3 T. Ahmad Shahi, 44 a.

daulah Superintendent[1] of the Privy Audience Chamber (*Ghusal-khana*) in addition to the pluralities previously conferred on him from time to time. There is reason to believe that now at least he exercised the power which was put into his hands by his several offices. From the 6th of September, 1752, to the 16th of March, 1753, he was unhampered by opposition or serious intrigue in his work as Superintendent of Artillery and Deputy Wazir ; and from 1st January to 16th March, 1753, he had a free hand in the discharge of the duties of the other portfolios in his charge.

Meanwhile Safdar Jang's grasping and domineering conduct at Court and his policy of self-aggrandisement created for him a host of enemies from amongst the old nobility. The murder of Javed Khan had already antagonised the Queen-mother, Udham Bai, who openly exhibited her highest resentment and vowed vengeance against the perpetrator of the deed. Surrounded as he was by Safdar Jang's relations, friends and nominees, the Emperor too was chafing under the dictatorship of the Wazir. The universal discontent against his policy strengthened the Turani party headed by his principal rival Intizam-ud-daulah, and led to the formation of a deep-laid conspiracy with the object of supplanting him in the *Wizarat*. The Queen-mother not only blessed it, but also put herself actively at its head, and the Emperor fell completely into the hands of the plotters. When their scheme had been fully matured, they decided first of all to procure the dismissal of Shuja-ud-daulah from the post of Superintendent of Artillery and to turn out of the palace-fort all those men of the Artillery department who were specially attached to their chief. But, afraid of the implacable enmity of the mighty Wazir, none of the nobles volunteered himself to accept the office. Accordingly, the policy of openly dismissing Shuja-ud-daulah was discarded in favour of one of secretly endeavouring to achieve the same object by a clever and tactful device. On the 17th of March, 1753, the Emperor summoned Shuja-ud-daulah's deputy,

Delhi Chronicle, 74.

Musawi Khan, *Naib Mir Atish*, and undermined his authority by censuring him publicly for his refusing admittance into the fort to all other nobles and officers except those connected with the Wazir. Hardly had one-fourth of the night passed (17th March) when the imperialists, having raised an utterly false alarm that Safdar Jang was coming to attack the royal fort at the head of a big force, arrayed themselves in battle order outside it. Having been deceived by this baseless rumour, the *Qiladar*, Abu Turab Khan, who too, had taken his post outside, fled immediately to the Wazir's house to inform him of the state of affairs. Scarcely was his back turned when all his men were driven out of the fort, and its gates closed against Safdar Jang, and the big guns arranged on its battlements were turned towards the Wazir's house.[1] Finding himself out-manoeuvred and his mansion within range of the fort-guns, Safdar Jang, accompanied by Shuja-ud-daulah and all his dependants and troops, left Delhi on the 26th March, and both the sides began making preparations for an open contest in the field.

After nearly a month's aimless roving outside the capital, Safdar Jang despatched, on 22nd April, Rajendra Giri Gosain to plunder the jagirs of the Turani nobles, situated near Delhi, and this led to a sudden rise of prices in the city. Next, on the 5th of May, he ordered an attack on the houses of the enemy chiefs. Offended at this effrontery, the Emperor formally dismissed Shuja-ud-daulah from all his offices, including the command of the Imperial Artillery, on the 8th May, and appointed Hisam Khan Samsam-ud-daulah *Mir Atish.* The Wazir retaliated by plundering Old Delhi. The infuriated monarch now dismissed Safdar Jang from the post of the first minister on 13th May and raised Intizam-ud-daulah to that coveted dignity. As a reply to this, the *ex*-wazir that very day placed on the throne an eunuch of handsome features, sometime before purchased by Shuja-ud-daulah, entitled him "Akbar Shah, the Just", and gave him out to be a grandson of Kam Bakhsh, the youngest son of Alamgir Aurangzeb. This civil

[1] Delhi Chronicle, 76 ; T. Ahmad Shahi 49 a ; T. M. 155 b-156 a ; Sair, 891.

war between the Emperor and his Wazir, which may be said to have begun on 22nd April, 1753—the day when Safdar Jang's men invaded the Turani jagirs—lasted for six months and twelve days, and peace was made on 5th November when the *status quo* in respect of the parties at the time was restored. Having been confirmed in the governorship of his provinces, Awadh and Allahabad, Safdar Jang and his son Shuja-ud-daulah resigned their claim to the ministership at the Court and left Delhi, with their families and followers, for Lucknow on the 7th of November, 1753.[1]

Although over 21 years of age at the time, Shuja-ud-daulah does not appear to have played any important or active part in this war which threatened him as well as his father with complete destruction. History does not record any brilliant feat of arms or any decisive action, any clever military manoeuvre or display of diplomatic skill, in short any conspicuous quality of generalship, to his credit in this his first experience of war. Scarcely is his name mentioned, more than once, by the contemporary Persian historians in their accounts of this long and deadly conflict. He had splendid opportunities of distinguishing himslelf in war and diplomacy. Evidently Shuja-ud-daulah did not make a full and profitable use of his time. On the contrary, his father's adopted son and rival and his own turban-exchanged brother, the notorious Ghazi-ud-din Khan Imad-ul-mulk, though five and a half years younger than Shuja-ud-daulah and entering the imperial service much later (*i.e.* on the 12th December, 1752), pushed himself immediately to the forefront, became the soul of the opposition against Safdar Jang and the real head of the imperial forces. Within the brief period of seven months, this masterful and ambitious young-man, still in his teens, succeeded in hurling down Shuja-ud-daulah and his father from their pinnacle of power and prestige in the Empire, beating them again and again in the open field and in diplomacy and driving them out of Delhi to Awadh. He

For a detailed account of the causes and events of this war, see the Author's First Two Nawabs of Awadh, Chapter XVI.

would undoubtedly have wrested from their hands the *Subahs* of Awadh and Allahabad by force of arms, had not the wavering Emperor and the intriguing Intizam-ud-daulah, the new Wazir, grown alarmed at his rapid successes and secretly counteracted all his measures.

5. Return to Awadh

Continuing their march in the direction of Agra, Safdar Jang and Shuja-ud-daulah reached Mathura on the 13th of November and halted there till the 17th. On this latter date, the discomfited father and son crossed the Yamuna here and turned towards Awadh. Having reached Lucknow, Safdar Jang left Shuja-ud-daulah at this town to re-organize the administration of the western half of his provinces which had been thrown into confusion during the uncertainty and anarchy of the civil war, and himself proceeded to Faizabad on the 22nd of Deccmber, 1753 to attend to the equally pressing needs of the Allahabad *Subah*. Since 1751 Muhammad Quli Khan, son of Safdar Jang's elder brother, Mirza Muhsin, had been Deputy Governor of Awadh, and now he was transferred to Allahabad, *vice* Ali Quli Khan, and Awadh was put in charge of Shuja-ud-daulah. We have no material to form an estimate of Shuja-ud-daulah's work at this critical period of Awadh history. The prolonged war with the Emperor, besides having been destructive of his reputation, had exhausted Safdar Jang's treasury, caused the slaughter of the flower of his troops and officers, including his most gallant and faithful commander Rajendra Giri Gosain, turned Imad-ul-mulk and the Marathas against him, and had given an opportunity to the big turbulent landlords of Awadh and Allahabad to endeavour to shake off his yoke. During the last ten months of his life from December 1753 to September 1754 his absorbing occupation was to repair these losses, to humble the rebellious landed barons and to thwart Imad-ul-mulk and the latter's Maratha allies in their attempt to wrest Allahabad from his hands. It seems probable that Shuja-ud-daulah readily assisted his father in this work. Certain it is that he was entrusted with the administration of Awadh, and that he supervised the affairs of both the provinces

for about three months or a little more; when Safdar Jang was busily negotiating and forming an alliance with the Emperor, Intizam-ud-daulah and Suraj Mal Jat against Imad-ul-mulk and the Marathas and had marched away to the western frontier of his dominion to assist the Emperor[1] in April, 1754.

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[1] T. Ahmad Shahi, 85b, 87a, 88a, 90a, 98ba, 103b-137a; T. M. 159b-163a; Abdul Karim, 280-2; Sair, 892-4; Shakir, 76-77.

chapter Two

A Period of Irresponsible Conduct and Frustrated Ambition

1. Succession to Awadh and Allahabad

Safdar Jang's strenuous labours had only begun to bear fruit when he was all of a sudden attacked by a frightful disease. To all appearance an ordinary tumour appeared on one of his feet, and it soon degenerated into a wound. In the space of a month or two all his leg from the toe to the thigh became putrefied, and the most skilful physicians having been baffled in their attempt to cure him, he died of it on his way from Paparghat on the Gomati to Lucknow on the 5th of October, 1754. Shuja-ud-daulah the only son and heir of Safdar Jang, succeeded to the governorship of the provinces of Awadh and Allahabad in the prime of youth. The news of Safdar Jang's death reached Delhi on 11th October, and the same evening, Emperor Alamgir II, after consulting Wazir Imad-ul-mulk, wrote with his own hand a special note to Shuja-ud-daulah, condoling with him on his father's demise and appointing him *Subahdar* of Awadh. Enclosing this imperial note in a letter written by himself, Imad-ul-mulk despatched them to Shuja-ud-daulah.[2] On the 25th of October the Emperor sent him a robe of honour of six pieces, a jewelled turban *(sarpech)* and a few other articles as formal investiture to the

T. Alamgir Sani, 25 a ; T. M. 172a ; Abdul Karim, 283 ; Sair, 894-5 ; Tabsir, 281 a ; Gulistan, 50 ; Maadan, IV, 187 a ; M. U. I., 368 ; Imad, p. 65, gives 1166 H., which is wrong. Delhi Chronicle, p. 100 has 17th Muharram instead of 17th Zilhijjah, which may be the copyist's error. T. Alamgir Sani, gives 16th instead of 17th Zilhijjah.

T. Tlamgir Sani, 25 a ; 'Tabsir, 281 a.

governorship of Awadh.[1] It is to be noted that neither the imperial letter nor the patent of appointment mentioned anything about Allahabad which the Emperor had been forced to grant to the new Wazir as early as the 22nd of December, 1753.[2] But realising that nothing short of a bloody and prolonged struggle in the open field could put him in effective possession of the province, Imad-ul-mulk made no proper arrangements for its occupation, and Allahabad too, like Awadh, passed quietly into Shuja-ud-daulah's hands as inheritance from his deceased father.

2. Ignoble conduct causes a popular agitation

On his accession Shuja-ud-daulah confirmed all his officers, big and small, in the posts and ranks they had held during the last days of his father's regime. Muhammad Quli Khan remained Deputy Governor of Allahabad and Ismail Khan Kabuli the chief adviser and commander of the Nawab as before.[3] Although not far short of 23 years of age, Shuja-ud-daulah was utterly indifferent to the business of administration and was immersed in sensual pleasures. He was addicted to the degrading vices of debauchery and pederasty *(husn parast wa amard dost ham bud)*, and his only other occupation was pigeon-flying, kite-flying and other similar boyish pastimes. Naturally all the important work of the State and with it all real power had passed into the hands of Ismail Khan, who desired to perpetuate his ascendancy and let Shuja-ud-daulah remain the nominal head. But the young Nawab's ignoble conduct soon alienated him and other high officers and gave great offence to the Hindu population of his realm ; and they resolved to replace him by his cousin Muhammad Quli Khan of Allahabad. Smitten by the charms

Delhi Chronicle, 115.

T. Ahmad Shahi, 98 a. Bayan Waqai of Abdul Karim Kashmiri (Sarkar MS), p. 285 says that Shuja was appointed as Governor of Awadh and Allahabad on promising to pay 40 lakhs of rupees as present. But Delhi Chronicle and T. Alamgir Sani, decidedly the best authorities on the period, are silent on the point.

Sair, III, 895.

of an eighteen-year old Khatri girl of the holy town of Ayodhya, adjacent to Faizabad, whom he had happened to see on the roof of her house, in one of his visits to the town, he got her abducted by some Naga troopers, the faithful followers of Rajendra Giri Gosain's disciples, Umrao Giri and Himmat Bahadur, and had her forcibly carried to his palace one night. The monster, having violated the innocent girl's chastity, sent her back to her house before dawn. Having learnt of this outrage, the girl's relations, humiliated and enraged, went to Raja Ram Narayan, Diwan of the province, placed their turbans at his feet and related the story of their woe and humiliation, expressing their resolution to leave Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion for good. The news of this crime spread like wild fire all over the town and roused keen resentment in the breasts of all. Ten to twelve thousand Khatris gathered at Ram Narayan's house, and from there, all of them, accompanied by the Raja and his brother Jagat Narayan, bare-headed and bare-footed, repaired to Ismail Khan and complained to him in these words: "The ruler of this land has girded up his loins to oppress his subjects. We look upon you as being in the place of the deceased Nawab Safdar Jang, for, it is said that the rod of the master is in the place of the master himself. We have come to request you to grant us *congee* this very day to go and settle wherever we like. God's world is not narrow. Or, let justice be done to us." Having heard their complaint, Ismail Khan summoned the chief Mughal officers and in consultation with them decided to arrest and punish the Naga brothers, Umrao Giri and Himmat Bahadur, for getting the defenceless girl forcibly abducted for the Nawab, and not to allow their ruler to associate with them or any other person of their vile character; but, if Shuja-ud-daulah refused to surrender them, to invite Muhammad Quli Khan from Allahabad and place him on the gaddi, allotting to the former a suitable jagir to enjoy it in oblivion and contempt. Shuja-ud-daulah having in fact haughtily refused to comply with their request, the Mughals firmly resolved to put their alternative proposal into practice. They issued an invitation to Muhammad

Quli Khan and prepared to aid him in seizing Awadh, and themselves abstained from going to Shuja-ud-daulah's court. When things reached this stage and war clouds began to hover on the hitherto fair horizon of Faizabad, they could no longer remain concealed from the vigilant eye of the Nawab's mother. With that shrewdness and wisdom which characterised her, Sadr-un-nisa immediately endeavoured to nip the affair in the bud, lest it should become too late and lead to alarming consequences. She summoned Raja Ram Narayan to the door of the female apartments in the Nawab's mansion and having seated him with only a curtain between the two, complained bitterly of the attitude of the Raja, Ismail Khan Kabuli and other high officers of the State towards her son and of their proposed rebellious move to replace him by Muhammad Quli Khan, who had no right to inherit Safdar Jang's dominion in the presence of the latter's son. She deprecated the raising of such a big commotion for the sake of an "unclean Hindu", and reminded the Raja of the favours and bounties heaped upon him and other officers by the late Nawab-Wazir and appealed to his sense of loyalty to his deceased master's son and heir. The words had the desired effect. Ram Narayan took it upon himself to appease that 'Hindu' and advised the Begum to summon Ismail Khan and other high officers and pacify them also before the popular agitation took a serious turn. Sadr-un-nisa invited the Mughal leaders to her presence and by her clever, diplomatic, reassuring talk convinced them of the impropriety of their conduct, warned them against the consequences of their ill-advised venture and sent them back with presents and a strong appeal to remain true to the salt they had been eating. The Mughals having returned to allegiance, the commotion thus came to an end. Muhammad Quli Khan, who had by this time covered half the distance to Faizabad, now learnt of the abrupt and unfavourable turn the affair had taken. Thinking it unwise to return lest it should be taken as a clear proof of his complicity in the agitation against Shuja-ud-daulah, he proceeded on towards Faizabad, giving it out that the object of his visit was

merely to see the Nawab. Although buring with feelings of revenge, Shuja-ud-daulah, out of policy, marched out of his capital to receive the Khan courteously, four miles in advance. The latter respectfully presented him *nazar* (offering) like a vassal, and after a few days' stay returned to Allahabad, seeing that the Mughal troops were no longer willing to rally to his support.[1]

3. A Vain Attempt to Seize the Wizarat

All this while, Delhi had been under the galling dictatorship of Wazir Imad-ul-mulk, who had usurped the authority formerly possessed and wielded by the Emperor except the pageant of royalty and was keeping Alamgir II, whom he had raised to the throne on 2nd June, 1754, as a puppet in his hands and a prisoner within the palace-fort of Shahjahanabad. The Imperial treasury was empty,[2] the royal privy-purse estates were usurped by rebels or misappropriated by the Wazir and parcelled out among his favourites, leaving no permanent or fixed source of income to the imperial household, the princesses in the palace starved for want of provisions,[3] the troops were in huge arrears and breaking out frequently in dangerous mutinies.[4] Almost all the important provinces such as the Punjab, Awadh, Bengal, Behar and Orissa, Gujarat, Malwa, and the Deccan had already become independent in practice. The descendants of the old enterprising Mughal nobility, once the main prop of the Empire, now preferring the cushioned ease of the palace to the grim risks of battle, had grown perfectly degenerate and their order had been dying a slow but sure death. Quite intelligent and cultured though its representatives in the second half of the 18th century were, none of them, with the single exception of Najib Khan Ruhela (who was not a Mughal noble), possessed real business-capacity or genius in civil administration or war, and above all, clearness of vision, grit of character and strength of will. Beneath an external gloss of

[1] Imad, pp. 66-68.
[2] T. Alamgir Sani, p. 9b.
[3] Ibid, pp. 29a & b, 190.
[4] Ibid, pp. 23a & b.

refinement were concealed their vulgar ambition and mean selfishness, unredeemed by such compensating virtues as thrift, patriotism or love for their much harassed tenantry. Except the Wazir and his partisans all the Delhi nobles of this generation were comparatively poor and reduced to a mere shadow of their formerselves, besides being tormented by the prepetual fear of ever-recurring Maratha invasions and all the horrors of pillage and spoliation attendant thereon. The people of the imperial city were being frequently fleeced and laid under exacting contributions by the tyrannical Wazir and his equally unscrupulous minions.[1] Life and property became unsafe in Delhi. It is no surprise therefore that we read in the chronicles of Alamgir II's reign that from the Emperor down to the meanest private—the nobility and the official class, the troops and the public—all were not only highly dissatisfied with but also positively hostile to Wazir Imad-ul-mulk.

Of the imperial nobles two, namely Intizam-ud-daulah and Shuja-ud-daulah, were particularly at cross purposes with the notorious Wazir. Intizam-ud-daulah's father and grandfather had played important roles as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he too had filled that office for a little over one year before he had been displaced by Imad-ul-mulk. Shuja-ud-daulah's father had controlled the affairs of the Empire for over five years, and it was, therefore, perfectly natural for him to hanker after that highest and most coveted office in the realm. But into so great a degeneration and sloth had the Mughal ruler and his nobles hopelessly sunk that neither could Alamgir II gather courage to dismiss Imad-ul-mulk from his office nor could Intizam-ud-daulah or Shuja-ud-daulah dare take the field to inflict a decisive blow upon his rival. Their only weapon was vile intrigue or a deep-laid secret conspiracy.

At last the continued reverse of fortune and despair of help from the Marathas wore out the patience of Intizam-ud-daulah, and he reluctantly prepared himself for a reconciliation with his bitterest adversary. Through the good offices of Malhar Rao

T. Alamgir Sani, pp. 11b, 20b, 25b.

Holkar, who negotiated for an amity between the two, they exchanged visits on 17th January, 1755 and the long quarrel thus came to an end.[1] But Shuja-ud-daulah would not resign his claims to the *Wizarat* so tamely. He anxiously watched the course of affairs at the Delhi court and kept himself in readiness to turn the difficulties of the Wazir to his advantage. Informed of the reverse of Imad-ul-mulk's troops in a battle[2] with Qutub Shah, popularly styled "the Rohela", and a dangerous mutiny of his Badakhshi Regiment (also called the *Sin Dagh* Regiment) which mobbed him at Panipat, dragged him through the streets of the town and tore his garments to pieces,[3] Shuja-ud-daulah welcomed it as a heaven-sent opportunity to execute his conspiracy for ousting him from office, a conspiracy that must have been maturing for some time in the past. Unfortunately it has not been described in detail by the court chronicler of Alamgir II, the only contemporary historian who has cared to take notice of this important incident. Shuja-ud-daulah despatched his confidential agent Ali Quli Khan Daghastani to Surajmal Jat of Bharatpur, who was a hereditary friend of the Awadh ruling house and an implacable foe of the Wazir, and to Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, who had his own grievance against the dictator at Delhi, to negotiate for their support of his candidature and active aid in procuring the dismissal of Imad-ul-mulk. These two notables, realizing that it was profitable to unite in a common cause, appear to have made an encouraging response and become parties to the plot. Ali Quli's mission having borne fruit, he now repaired to Delhi to hatch the conspiracy there. He wormed himself into the confidence of Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan, Assistant Superintendent of the Privy Audience Chamber, and Kishanchand Sud, and through them he sought the Emperor's blessing for the enterprise. But before the shilly-shallying conspirators could mature their plans fully, the Wazir, who must have got an

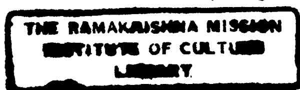
1 Sarkar, F. M. E. II, p. 42.
2 T. A. S., pp. 44b-46b ; T. M. 173b.
3 Ibid, pp. 48b-51a : T.M., 173b-174a ; Delhi Chronicle, 125 ; Shakir ; Sair, III, 896-97.

inkling of it, returned to Delhi post-haste in May, 1755, and wreaked a fearful vengeance on the suspects in the imperial town. His troops besieged the house of Kishanchand and plundered his property, but the latter was lucky enough to escape with his life by a back door. Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan was immediately dismissed from the office of Deputy-Superintendent of *Diwan-i-Khas* and imprisoned in his own house, and all those eunuchs who were in the least suspected of complicity in the plot were expelled from the palace. Next, the Wazir turned to settle his score with the more important of the conspirators outside, prominent among them being Surajmal of Bharatpur. It was, however, no easy matter to bring the powerful Jat chief to his knees, and all that the enraged keeper of the imperial puppet could do was to vent his impotent fury in silence and to direct Najib Khan Ruhela, on 7th June, 1755, to lead a futile punitive expedition against the Jat. But before the Ruhela could start on this mission peace was made through the efforts of Raja Nagar Mal, Diwan of Khalisa, on 26th July, which legalised most of Surajmal's recent territorial usurpations, without his having had to humble himself before the Wazir.[1]

4. Death of Ismail Khan

At home Shuja-ud-daulah's unpopularity compelled him to follow the policy of *laissez faire* for some time. Frustrated though it was owing to the tactful handling of the situation by the Begum-mother, the agitation against him referred to in the previous pages, had already spread to every house in Faizabad and Ayodhya and convinced the people that their family honour was not always safe, if Shuja-ud-daulah were to be his own master and the real head of the administration. Hence, they looked upon Ismail Khan as the protector of their honour and rights, and helped to strengthen his power and that of his Mughal followers ; and Shuja-ud-daulah, partly by reason of his natural aversion to business and partly from fear of offending the masterful *Naib*, kept his hands off the Government. After one full year's domination Ismail Khan, who had in fact

[1] T. Alamgir Sani, pp. 55a & b, 58b and 59a.



grown more powerful towards the end of his regime than he had been at the beginning, fell ill and died on 13th October, 1755 (7th Muharram, 1169 A. H.).[1] He was endowed with the sterling virtues of courage, bravery, soldierly talent and loyalty to an uncommon degree, and had been an object of special favours from Safdar Jang who raised him from an humble position to that of an officer and commander in his army. Eventually he rose to be his master's steward and hence out of gratitude for his bounties he styled himself Safdar Jang's *Chela* (slave) which, as a matter of fact, he had never been.[2] The Nawab remained absorbed in sensual pleasures and frivolous pastimes, leaving the work of administration in the hands of his new *Naib*, Musawi Khan, who had formerly been his deputy in the department of Imperial Artillery at Delhi.[3] The Khan succeeded to the office but not to the authority of Ismail Khan Kabuli, and for a year longer the Mughal ascendancy remained intact at the Court of Faizabad.

5. Open Rupture Between Shuja-ud-daulah and the Wazir ; Allahabad Transferred to the Bangash Chief

Ever since Safdar Jang and Imad-ul-mulk had come to a parting of ways early in 1753 on the question as to which of the two should possess the exclusive control and direction of the fast dwindling Empire, there had existed bitter enmity between the latter and the occupant of the *masnad* of Awadh. In May 1755 came Shuja-ud-daulah's swift and sudden, though abortive plot to replace Imad-ul-mulk in the office of the grand Wazir, and the Delhi dictator felt rudely shaken in his ministerial cushion of pride and power. The appearance of amity hitherto studiously preserved now yielded place to open hostility. The infuriated Wazir's first thought was to detach Surajmal Jat, a steadfast ally and accomplice of the chief conspirator, and afterwards to devise a scheme to play off one

1 Delhi Chronicle, 128.
2 Imad, 56.
3 Sair, III, 895 ; Imad, 68.

against the other of the remaining two, namely, Shuja-ud-daulah and Ahmad Khan Bangash.

As soon as he was free from his ill-foreboding Punjab campaign, Imad-ud-mulk's attention turned towards the east. With the object of compelling the Ruhelas at the point of the bayonet, to pay the imperial revenue which they had with great contumely withheld for more than a year, and then proceeding against Shuja-ud-daulah, the Wazir with the Emperor, marched to the town of Luni, a few miles north of the capital, early in July, 1756. Here they encamped in the *Farhat-afza* garden, ready to resume their journey eastward as soon as the requisite troops, munition and money had been got together for the intended campaign. From this place the intriguing Chancellor of the Exchequer, having decided to play his trump card, despatched an imperial letter patent appointing Ahmad Khan Bangash governor of Allahabad *vice* Shuja-ud-daulah and instructing him to obtain possession of his new charge without delay. But even before the Bangash chief could complete his preparations and Imad-ul-mulk could move out of Luni to exert political and military pressure on behalf of his newly discovered instrument, the youthful Shuja-ud-daulah, who had happily received timely information of the hostile designs of his enemies, resolved to forestall the manoeuvre of the allied forces, displaying the utmost activity and vigour in hurrying up to his western frontier to prevent Ahmad Khan from crossing over into his *Subah*. At the same time, he sent positive instructions to his deputy at Allahabad, Muhammad Quli Khan alias Mirza Kochak to instantly organise the defence of the province, refuse possession to the Bangash and fight bravely, if it came to war. Shuja-ud-daulah began his march in August or September, 1756, with a vast army, artillery and materials of war, stopped at Lucknow for a few days only, and then reached the western frontier of Awadh. Here at some distance away from the left bank of the Ganga opposite to the town of Farrukhabad he set up his encampment to prevent Ahmad Khan's crossing the river. Totally paralysed by Shuja-ud-daulah's unwonted activity and promptitude, the craven Bangash durst

not issue out of his capital, and gave up his intention of going out to assume the *Subah-dari* of Allahabad. Seeing that the affair had taken a turn for the worse, the Wazir too displayed no anxiety to begin his intended march towards Awadh.

Meanwhile a strong disquieting rumour spread over the land that Shuja-ud-daulah and Surajmal Jat had formed a coalition to fight the intriguing Wazir to the bitter end. Dismayed by the alarming report, Nagarmal and Najib-ud-daulah made an earnest effort to bring about a compromise between the parties. Najib used his influence with Imad-ul-mulk to get Ahmad Khan Bangash's appointment to Allahabad annulled, and he got that province confirmed in Shuja-ud-daulah's name. The main cause of the quarrel having thus been removed, the young ruler of Awadh gave up the resolution of a fight with Ahmad Khan and made peace with the latter. There was still some uncertainty regarding the attitude of Surajmal. To conciliate him, Nagarmal pressed forward with alacrity the negotiations for a friendly settlement, and sent his trusted agent, Sujan Brahman, to bring the Jat chief to Delhi. The invitation met with a ready response, and Surajmal arrived at the village of Tilpat, 14 miles south of the capital, early in November, 1756. At this place Nagarmal came to interview him on behalf of the Wazir on the 11th November and the terms of the Peace of July 1755 were re-affirmed.[1]

6. Successful Aggressions of Balwant Singh

For more than two years the outlying districts of Awadh and Allahabad had been in a state of ferment. Safdar Jang's open rebellion against and prolonged war with Emperor Ahmad Shah, had afforded the ambitious landed aristocracy in the province, a sufficient pretext for defying the Nawab-Wazir's authority and making a bid for independence. Particularly fruitful of consequences were the aggressive activities of the cool and calculating Balwant Singh, Raja of Banaras, who had, by making a clever use of opportunities, good government and strict economy, force and diplomacy, augmented his power and resources to

T. Alamgir Sani, pp. 79b-84b.

such an extent that as early as 1752 he had been able to inflict a decisive defeat upon Ali Quli Khan, deputy governor of Allahabad.[1] Once again did he feel himself free to flout the authorities : he withheld the annual tribute to the Awadh treasury and measured swords with the deputy governors of the two provinces in the open field.[2] Balwant strove hard to take the fullest advantage of Safdar Jang's difficulties, and military reverses in the civil war (1753) and planned a scheme for the conquest of the long belt of land lying due south of the town of Banaras, surrounded by the Ganga in the north, the Karam-nasa in the east, the Soan river and the Kaimur range in the south and the chain of hills in the west, comprised in the modern Mirzapur district of what is now known as Uttar Pradesh. His chief objective was the strong fortress of Bijaigrah, standing on a lofty hill, 2,017 feet above the sea level, protected by mountain ranges in the east and the south and situated at a distance of about 58 miles south-east of Mirzapur and 54 miles south of Banaras. Almost inaccessible to an invader, it was well-adapted to be a place of shelter at a time of invasion. It was equally serviceable as a military outpost, being only a few miles north of the lofty Kaimur range running parallel to the river Soan, to which the Raja was anxiously desirous of pushing his southern frontier. But between this well-known fort and Banaras intervened the territory and fortresses of a few petty chieftains who owed allegiance directly to Shuja-ud-daulah and barred Balwant's expansion southwards. First of all Balwant led his mighty force against Patita, a mud-fort situated at the foot of a hill in Bhagwant Pargana, and captured it, after a short siege, together with the surrounding land from Jamaait Khan towards the end of 1166H (about the middle of 1753). Next to feel the weight of his conquering arm was Latifpur, a strong fortress made of brick and stone, situated in the Kupsa hills, 24 miles due south of Banaras, and surrounded by a wide and deep moat with a dense

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1 Tabsir, 272b ; Balwant-nama, 25a.
2 T. Ahmad Shahi, 112b.

forest all round it, and rightly looked upon by the Raja as the key to the conquest of Bijaigarh. Fortunately for Balwant, Malik Farrukh, commandant of the fort and lord of the surrounding *Zamindari*, many miles in area, died about September-October, 1753, leaving two youthful sons, Malik Ahsan and Malik Ahmad. In order to lull their suspicion, the Raja sympathised with the young Maliks in their sad bereavement by sending them condolatory messages and mourning robes, and then finding them off their guard, he swooped down one day on one of the two in his fort at Ahraura,[1] 20 miles south of Banaras. Malik Ahmad was surrounded and slain in an abortive attempt to escape from the fort, leaving it in the victor's possession. The news of this disaster filled Malik Ahsan with consternation, and overpowered by the sense of personal danger, he fled away towards Zamania, 35 miles east of Banaras, without offering the least resistance to the invader. Balwant fortified the fortresses and quietly established his sway over the parganas of Ahraura and Barhar. With an unbroken belt of land from Banaras to Latifpur in his possession, the cautious Raja now invaded Bijaigarh with the object of extending his southern frontier to the range of the hills and the river Soan. The expedition was crowned with success, the fort was wrested from the weak hands of Bijai Singh, and Balwant Singh's ambition of a scientific frontier in the south was completely realized.[2]

All this time, while Balwant was triumphantly bearing his victorious standard to the southern extremity of what is now the Mirzapur district and carrying everything before him, Safdar Jang had been in the grip of a life and death struggle at Delhi. Immediately after he had succeeded in patching up a peace with the Emperor, he started for Faizabad and from there proceeded with all expedition to Banaras to chastise the Raja for his recent aggressions. He reached that town on 17th February, 1754; but on his near approach Balwant had

[1] For Latifpur and Ahraura, see Indian Atlas sheet 63 O.
[2] Balwant, 31b-53a.

already crossed the Ganga and taken shelter[1] in Chandrauti, 12 miles north-east of Banaras. Aware of the Nawab's difficulties, the Raja played a waiting game from his safe retreat on the other side of the river and resolved to tire out his patience till a more pressing danger called him away to another part of his dominion. Fortune seemed to favour the brave ruler of Banaras. While lying outside the walls of the holy city, Safdar Jang received urgent messages from the Emperor and Intizam-ud-daulah summoning him to western Awadh to join them in an expedition against their common and much-hated foes, the Marathas and Imad-ul-mulk. The ex-Wazir complied immediately, leaving Balwant Singh free to consolidate his new conquests. Shuja-ud-daulah on his accession, thirsting for revenge, demanded an increase of revenue, which Balwant secure in his newly acquired mountain fastnesses unceremoniously refused to comply with (Tarikh-i-Banaras, 87a.). Shuja-ud-daulah bided his time in anger.

7. Shuja's Expedition to Banaras

Safdar Jang's death, occurring as it did at a time of unprecedented eclipse of his family and crisis for his provinces, threw the Nawab-Wazir's administration into confusion and added to the trouble in eastern Awadh. Determined to revive the long forgotten days of Aurangzeb, the *Qazi* (Judge of Muslim Canon Law) and *Muhtasib* (Censor of morals) of the town of Banaras, rallied a party of fanatical Muslims and demolished the sacred temple of Visheshwar Mahadeva, situated near the Alamgiri mosque, on 22nd September, 1755. The disunited and tractable Hindu population closed their shops and stopped all business—their only weapon of passive resistance to bring pressure upon the militant, though now demoralised, race of their rulers—and the Peshwa Balaji Rao's *Guru* (religious preceptor), the head of the illustrious Dikshit family of Patankar, resident in the holy city, went on a hunger-strike as a protest against this outrage. The Peshwa's Guru was ultimately prevailed upon by the persistent request

T. Ahmad Shahi, 112b.

of Raja Balwant Singh and the persuasion of Jai Singh, Naib Faujdar of the district, to end his fast by eating some fruits; and only then did the Hindus reopen their shops.[1] Business now resumed its normal course; but the relations between the two communities must have remained embittered for some time longer and caused difficulties to the administration of the province.

The town and fort of Chunar situated on the Ganga, 20 miles due east of Mirzapur, were also in the throes of a revolution. Built on a lofty mountain peak and popularly invested with the glamour of impregnability, this historic fortress was the only place of considerable importance in Raja Balwant Singh's dominion which was in the hands appointed directly by and owing allegiance to the *Subahdar* of Awadh.

Ahmad Beg Khan, its *Qiladar,* having died in 1753, the command of the fort and the garrison devolved with the explicit permission of Safdar Jang, on his minor son Agha Jani and on the latter's guardian Agha Mir who was a slave of the deceased. Confusion now entered into the affairs of Chunar, and the time coincided with that of Shuja-ud-daulah's accession, giving the long-sought opportunity to the lord of Banaras to interfere with this arrangement. As the Raja knew that the employment of force would draw down upon him a veritable storm from Faizabad and indefinitely postpone the surrender of the fort, he had recourse to the expedient of calling the golden keys to his aid. His tempting bribe of one lakh of rupees made Agha Mir's mouth water, and he prepared to betray the fort. But owing to the timely intervention of Shuja-ud-daulah the deep-laid plot miscarried. Freed from the galling tutelage of his grasping guardian-minister and the machinations of the Delhi dictator, Shuja-ud-daulah was badly disturbed in his temporary repose by the news of Balwant's negotiations with Agha Mir and of the communal discord at Banaras. So he resolved to hasten to the scene to inflict condign punishment upon the offenders and to

[1] Delhi Chronicle, 128.

restore communal harmony in the town. At the head of a strong force he marched to Jaunpur towards the end of 1756[1] and thence turned towards Banaras, whence Balwant Singh had fled to the shelter of Latifpur fort. On the way the Nawab's forces encountered a tough opposition from the infuriated mother-in-law of Balwant, whom she despised for his craven flight to the hills and whose cowardly stain she was determined to wash off by a bold martial stand of her high-spirited troops. A brisk and relentless cannonading lasting from morning till afternoon failed to make an impression upon the old lady's small mud fort of Pindra, 19 miles north-west of Banaras, the defence of which she had been supervising in person from its walls. For fear of earning eternal infamy by going to extremities with a woman and of forcibly depriving her of her prossessions, Shuja-ud-daulah had the quarrel made up through the mediation of Raja Himmat Bahadur who prevailed upon the lady to vacate the fort for a while to save the Nawab's honour and pledged his word for its immediate restoration. The promise was fulfilled. Then the Nawab proceeded to Chunar.

The traitorous Agha Mir immediately sought refuge by flight, and Shuja-ud-daulah occupied the fort of Chunar and appointed a trusted officer of his as its commandant. The Nawab's cupidity was excited by the abundance he found there, and he laid the minor Agha Jani under a special contribution, demanding from him seven lakhs of rupees in hard cash in addition to valuables and furniture estimated at four lakhs, under the plea of escheating his deceased father's property in consonance with a long defunct Mughal custom according to which the sovereign was the master of the belongings of every dead officer even though he might have left legitimate heirs behind him. After these momentous transactions Shuja-ud-daulah entered Banaras and directed Fazl Ali Khan, son of Shaikh Abdullah and *Faujdar* of Ghazipur district, to drive Balwant Singh out of Latifpur. But the latter was not

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1 Shuja reached Partapgarh a day or two before 16th Nov. 1756 (see Balkrishan's letter of that date, Raj. VI, 430).

the man to be so easily entrapped ; he burnt Latifpur and shut himself up in Bijaigarh and invited the Marathas to his aid from the vicinity of Patna. Shuja-ud-daulah in the impetuosity of his youth refused to listen to the sane advice of the celebrated Shaikh Ali Hazin of Banaras to come to terms with the powerful Raja, and marched to Latifpur to back up the proposed operations of his advance-guard under Fazl Ali. Aware of the magnitude of the task of reducing the rebellious Raja, Fazl Ali demanded, as the price of his undertaking the expedition, that he should be furnished with 10,000 cavalry, be exempt from the payment of the current year's revenue (10 lakhs) and be confirmed as the ruler of the Banaras State on the same annual tribute as Balwant used to pay, if he succeeded in ousting the Raja from it. The negotiations were in full swing when the news from Delhi confirmed the alarming reports that Ahmad Shah Abdali accompanied by a formidable Afghan force had swooped down upon the fair fields of the Punjab and had triumphantly entered the capital of India. So great was the panic at Delhi that its residents began to flee to places of safety and the Wazir issued frantic appeals to Shuja-ud-daulah and other notables to come speedily to his assistance. At this psychological moment Khwaja Tamkin, Shuja-ud-daulah's chief minister, Muhammad Ali Khan, and one or two other officers of the Nawab's army warned Shuja-ud-daulah against the suicidal policy of forcing such a powerful vassal as Balwant to remain for an indefinitely long period in open rebellion at such a juncture when a foreign invader was committing frightful atrocities in one corner of the country, and the landed potentates in different parts of the two provinces were dreaming of independence, and they urged the advisability of immediately confirming the Raja in his possessions on payment of a suitable fine, for he alone could easily realise revenue from such a turbulent *taluqa* as Banaras and not a man of the type of Fazl Ali, who could hardly discharge the liabilities of his district of Ghazipur with regularity and ease. Moreover, if Fazl Ali succeeded in uniting Balwant's territory with what he was already in possession of, he would, they added, become the

master of an extensive dominion comprising more than half of the eastern frontier of Awadh, and would assuredly entertain pretensions of equality with the Nawab ; and, if he failed to humble the Raja, which was more likely, the loss of ten lakhs of rupees, the revenue of the year from Banaras, and the cost of 10,000 troopers during the unknown period of the proposed expedition must mean a useless drain on the Awadh treasury. Muhammad Ali Khan's irresistible logic appealed to the young Nawab, who was already growing nervous at the thought of the fate of his own dominion should the terrible Afghan avalanche roll further down into the interior of Hindustan. He approved of the proposal for peace and accepted the terms settled in a conference between Lal Khan, agent of the Raja, and his own officers. Balwant bound himself to pay immediately five lakhs[1] of rupees as present (*peshkash*) and agreed to an addition of the sum of five lakhs to the annual tribute payable by him to the Nawab's treasury, the whole now amounting to twelve lakhs of rupees per annum. Shuja-ud-daulah confirmed the Raja in all his possessions and bestowed upon him the pargana of Bhadohi as a rent-free grant (*jagir*), and began his return march to Faizabad,[2] (February and March 1757 A. D. 1170 A. H.) with the object of making arrangements for the defence of his territory against a possible Abdali invasion from the north.

1 S. P. D. XXI. letter 170 says that he paid 25 lakhs of rupees to the Nawab.

2 Imad, 68-69 ; Balwant-nama, 72-77 ; T. Alamgir Sani, 79b-80a ; Tarikh-i-Banaras, 87a-90b.

chapter Three

A Tussle with the Wazir

1. Imad Plans an Expedition against Shuja, March 1757

Towards the end of 1756, Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul, again swooped down on the fair fields of the Punjab with the object of chastising Imad-ul-mulk for his impudent interference in the frontier province which had become a part of the Afghan kingdom by right of conquest. With no opposition, organised or even unorganised, he entered Delhi and after devastating the country as far south as Mathura and Agra returned to Afghanistan in March, 1757. Before quitting Delhi the Shah planned and despatched an expedition against the eastern provinces of Awadh and Allahabad in accordance with the Afghan monarch's scheme which embraced the restoration of the Empire to Alamgir II and the winning back for him of the lost provinces of Hindustan from the hands of the rebel governors. For various reasons Shuja-ud-daulah was the first, and as it subsequently turned out to be the only governor, to feel the brunt of the Shah's and his Indian supporters' wrath. His father had earned eternal infamy in the eyes of Indian ultra-loyalists by openly rebelling against and engaging himself in a long deadly war with the late Emperor Ahmad Shah, and, since his succession to the viceroyalty, Shuja-ud-daulah also had failed to remit the annual revenues to the imperial treasury. The grand Wazir Imad-ul-mulk, who had been pardoned and restored to his office, looked upon him as his hereditary enemy, and he is said to have suggested to the Shah that an expedition to the Doab would easily enable him

to fulfil his obligation of furnishing two krores of rupees imposed upon him in consideration of his restoration to the Wazirate.

Further there was no love lost between him and the double-dyed Ruhela traitor Najib Khan, who was at once the Abdali's adviser and instrument, and Shuja-ud-daulah had recently given him cause for offence.[1] Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad had not yet given up his long-cherished ambition of adding the Allahabad *Subah* to his paternal dominion and his clever envoy Sher Andaz Khan alias Mir Sahib, whom he had deputed on this important mission, was constantly dinning into the invader's ears the advisability of sending an army against Shuja-ud-daulah, opposed by heredity and moral and material interests to the whole race of Indian Pathans, and magnifying the advantages that would accrue therefrom. Finally Shuja-ud-daulah's indifference to the Afghan conqueror's presence in the country and the proximity of Awadh to Delhi with no intervening territory except that of the Ruhelas who were friendly to the invader, seemed to invite the expedition and convince its sponsors that the accomplishment of the task was by no means difficult. But despite the pleadings of Sher Andaz Khan, the Abdali passed over the ambitious claims of the Bangash chief to Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion, for evidently the work of reducing the latter was beyond the capacity and strength of the cripple ruler of Farrukhabad. It was decided on the representation of Imad-ul-mulk to send for a prince of the Mughal royal family and appoint him the nominal head of the expeditionary force so as to inspire obedience and submission in the vassals and governors and minimise the chances of an open opposition from the rebel chiefs. In response to the Shah's summons the Emperor Alamgir II despatched, on Saturday the 14th March, 1757, to the Abdali camp near Mathura his son Prince Hidayat Bakhsh with his staff after having formally invested him with the governorship of Bengal and Bihar ; and on the third day of his

S. P. D. Vol. II, L. No. 67.

departure another prince named Mirza Baba was appointed *Subahdar* of Awadh and Allahabad and given leave to join Hidayat Bakhsh (16th March). So poorly were the imperial princes furnished with troops and other materials of war and even money for daily expenses that their poverty and high pretensions would have excited ridicule among the third-rate nobles of the time of Shah Jahan or Aurangzeb. In this miserable condition they reached the Abdali camp near Sarai Kola, 6 miles from Mathura, on Saturday, 19th March (27th Jamadi II), and the following day the Shah bestowed on each of them a Khilat, an elephant and rupees 10,000 and gave them leave of departure for Awadh and Bengal, after having handed to them on his own behalf the patents of appointment for the *Subahdari* of their respective provinces. Imad-ul-mulk was directed to join the princes with his personal troops together with some Durrani horse under the command of Jangbaz Khan, an Afghan officer of note in the service of the Shah. Unable to spare a sufficient portion of his force, the plan chalked out by the Abdali was to send the princes into the Doab to drive out the Marathas and re-establish Mughal rule in that region, enlist fresh troops and then to march against Awadh, and in case they succeeded in reducing Shuja-ud-daulah to proceed further to Bengal to bring it back under the control of Delhi. The Shah felt the necessity of a strong armament in a trial of strength against the resourceful rule of Awadh, and accordingly he wrote urgent letters to Ahmad Khan Bangash, Hafiz Rahmat and other notable Ruhela chiefs calling upon them to effect a junction with the two princes and assist them in the enterprise.

2. The Delhi Princes enter the Doab

Headed by the princes the army reached Agra on the 23rd of March, and crossing the Yamuna on the 25th at the Rajghat ferry proceeded towards the town of Mainpuri. As they stepped out of Agra they were joined by Sultan Khan, full brother of Najib Khan Ruhela, with his contingent of 400 horse. The party arrived at Mainpuri on the 31st, and here a five days' halt was made to enable Ahmad Khan Bangash to come with

re-inforcements and to chalk out a plan of action in consultation with him before proceeding to Awadh. In pursuance of this resolution Sher Andaz Khan was sent back to Farrukhabad to bring his master expeditiously ; and Ahmad Khan Bangash, accompanied by his son Mahmud Khan and a light escort, reached the camp on 4th April (14th Rajjab) and presented tents with screens, money, grain and some other things to the imperial princes. Next day (5th April) Prince Baba with Imad-ul-mulk, Mir Yahiya Khan and Aḥmad Khan Bangash marched on to Qadirganj, on the south bank of the Ganga, 40 miles due north of Mainpuri, probably with the object of winning the Ruhelas, who were advancing to the other bank of the river, over to his side, while, Hidayat Bakhsh accompanied by Jangbaz Khan and Mahmud Khan Bangash travelled southward to Etawah, about 30 miles south of Mainpuri, in order to re-establish the imperial authority in that district. On the near approach of the Emperor's son, the Maratha commandant (*thanadar*), troops and civil servants fled away from Etawah without making even a demonstration of resistance, and the whole district quickly reverted to its legitimate masters. But hardly did this accession of territory prove profitable to the prince ; the Abdali's troops habitual plunderers as they were, looted the defenceless inhabitants and Hidayat Bakhsh could establish no civil administration. Prince Baba fared no better at Qadirganj. Hafiz Rahmat Khan of Ruhelkhand, who had arrived at the head of a large body of his tribesmen and encamped on the other bank of the Ganga, opposite Qadirganj, on the pretence of complying with the Abdali's request to assist the expedition but really with the object of watching the course of the impending struggle on the southern frontier of his own dominion, crossed the river one day and waited on the prince, but returned to his encampment, without making a definite promise to join him.

While the two princes were thus occupied in two different places in the Doab, news came that Shuja-ud-daulah had despatched an army under Anup Giri Gosain to oppose the advance of the Delhi armament, and that this force was coming

by rapid marches towards Farrukhabad to invade and plunder it. This shook Ahmad Khan's resolution and becoming apprehensive of the fate of his capital, he took leave of Mirza Baba and hastened back towards it. The prince too broke his camp next day, and after three days' journey reached Farrukhabad. On his request Hidayat Bakhsh came from Etawah on 6th May and there was a huge concourse of men in the Bangash capital. Hafiz Rahmat also, desiring to be as near the contending parties as the exigencies of the situation required, proceeded to Jalalabad,[1] about 24 miles north of Farrukhabad, where he was joined by Faizullah Khan, son of Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela, and a few other Ruhela chiefs from their country north of the Ganga. A vigorous attempt was now made to win them all to the cause of the princes. Hafiz Rahmat consented to receive the princes and accordingly the Wazir conducted them and Ahmad Khan Bangash across the river to the Ruhela camp. But despite prolonged negotiations and the desperate efforts of the imperialists, the Ruhelas were loth to enter into an offensive alliance. For one thing, there was no unanimity among them; and they had a wholesome fear of Shuja-ud-daulah whose enmity they were by no means willing to provoke. Moreover, Sadullah Khan, being a personal friend of Shuja-ud-daulah with whom he had exchanged turbans, endeavoured from his head quarters at Aonla to bring about a peace between the parties even before a gun was fired from either side. Imad-ul-mulk's mission having failed, he returned disheartened to the princes' camp, now set up north of Farrukhabad.

3. Shuja-ud-daulah Seeks Maratha Aid

Usually absorbed in pastimes and sensual pleasures though he was, Shuja-ud-daulah at times displayed commendable energy and activity, especially when his dominion was threatened or his life was in danger. The news of the irruption of the Delhi princes into the Doab and their impending expedition against Awadh did not come to him as a great surprise,

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[1] S. P. D. Vol. XXVII, L. 161.

knowing as he did the implacable hostility which the unscrupulous Wazir and the whole race of Indian Pathans bore him, and he set to work to get himself in readiness to accord a fitting reception to his foes. A politically-minded Maratha pilgrim to the holy places of northern India noted as early as March 5, 1757, that Shuja-ud-daulah was apprehensive of the future designs of the Abdali invader and was making preparations to meet with advantage any future danger from that quarters,[1] despite the fact that the latter had till then no idea of despatching an expedition against Awadh, and was even said to have made an endeavour to win him over to his side by sending him a patent of appointment for the posts of the Paymaster General (*Mir Bakhshi*) and Superintendent of Imperial Artillery (*Mir-i-Atish*). No sooner did the news of the invasion become confirmed than Shuja-ud-daulah opened negotiations with the Marathas, who had advanced under Raghunath Rao as far as Jaipur, for a defensive and offensive alliance, and sent Bhawani Das, his trusty agent, to their headquarters to expedite the conclusion of such an agreement and the march of the Deccanis to his assistance.

The Maratha chief deputed Ragho Laxman Purandare, a man of considerable ability and diplomatic talent as well as of gift of observation, as an envoy to the Nawab's court, and we learn from his numerous letters that Shuja-ud-daulah was anxious to secure the armed assistance of the Marathas on the basis of a new and clearly defined treaty which he wanted to enter into directly with Raghunath Rao, while the Marathas, not very fond of precisely unequivocal terms and desirous of avoiding a definite undertaking on behalf of the Nawab lest it should lead to a permanent breach with the Wazir, appealed to the vague understanding between them and Shuja-ud-daulah's father, and, as is clear from the circumstantial evidence in our possession, demanded the cession of Hindu places of pilgrimage, like Kashi (Banaras) Prayag (Allahabad), and

[1] S. P. D. Vol. XXI, L. 103.

Ayodhya (Faizabad) in his dominion in addition. And, above all, they wanted money and would hire out their services to the highest bidder, and it seems that Shuja-ud-daulah in this respect did not come up to their expectations.[1] In fact, the basic principles of the Maratha policy at the time did not accord with an alliance with a provincial governor, however powerful, against the elements of power at the Delhi court, which they ardently desired to dominate and under the cover of the authority and legality of which they wished to pursue a policy of systematic conquest and spoliation in northern India. But, fortunately for Shuja-ud-daulah, the Marathas had to recover the Doab which had just fallen into the hands of the Bangash and Ruhela Pathans and to chastise Wazir Imad-ul-mulk for his temporary defection and casting his lot in with the foreign invader, and hence they definitely displayed a leaning towards the ruler of Awadh. Accordingly, although no formal alliance was contracted, Raghunath Rao considered it politic, after protracted negotiations of about two months, to despatch ahead from his headquarters at Jaipur an army of 23,000 troopers under the command of such veteran leaders as Sakha Ram Bapu, Antaji Mankeshwar and a few others with the double purpose of recovering the Maratha possessions in the fertile and much coveted region of the Doab and of exerting pressure on behalf of Shuja-ud-daulah by making a military demonstration against the imperialists under the two princes. The chief commander of this army was, however, instructed not to use it in a battle to aid the Nawab unless he paid handsomely for its services.[2]

4. Shuja-ud-daulah Marches Against Imad-ul-mulk

Meanwhile Shuja-ud-daulah's military preparations were

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1 S. P. D. Vol. XXI. Letters 100, 114, 123 ; Vol. XXVII, Letter 182 ; S. P. D. Vol. XXI, Letter 138. As Raghunath Rao wrote to Sakha Ram Bapu in a letter, received by the latter on 13-7-1757, "We have left Poona to get money ... ...I have sent you ahead to acquire wealth and territory and not for anybody's aid." [Ibid].

2 S. P. D. Vol. XXI, Letters 122, 123, 138 ; ii. 176.

more or less complete ; and he now told off his advance-guard, 10,000 strong under his famous officer Anup Giri Gosain, westward of Lucknow to intercept the advance of the hostile princes. This army reached the western border of Awadh about the end of the third week of April and encamped at Dauganj near the town of Sandi, intent on proceeding further and looting Farrukhabad. It has already been related how Anup Giri's sudden emergence in the close vicinity of the Bangash capital shook the nerves of Ahmad Khan and the princes and all hastened to be within easy reach of the walls of Farrukhabad and those of the strong fort of Fatehgarh, 2 miles further down on the Ganga. Hardly had Anup Giri reached his destination when Shuja-ud-daulah himself was up on his journey, halting for many a day at Lucknow and Nawabganj (11th May), 13 miles south-west of the former, in expectation of the news of the start of his Maratha allies, and marching along the modern Katchha road (running from Lucknow to Sandi), by way of Akbarpur (28th May), Bangarmau (31st May), and Bilgram (5th June),[1] and reached Sandi, then a very populous and important town, on the river Garra, on the 6th June. He had delayed his march till he learnt from Trimbak Rao's letter of the 13th May that Sakha Ram Bapu and Tatia Gangadhar at the head of a respectable force, about 25,000 strong, were coming over to the Doab to assist him, and he was now glad to resume his journey, declaring, "I am a loyal servant of the Emperor and the Imperial princes. But I regard Nizam-ul-mulk (Wazir Imad) and Ahmad Khan as my enemies. If they are removed from the side of the princes, I will come to pay my respects with folded hands and shall sacrifice my life and property (in their service). If, on the other hand, they remain (with the princes) I shall (be constrained to) fight."[2]

S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letters 120, 123. Akbarpur is 10 m. N. W. of Nawalganj ; Ibid Vol. XXVII, letters 161, 172. Bangarmau is 23 m. N. W. of Akbarpur. Bilgram is 23 m. N. W. of Bangarmau and Sandi is 9 m. N. W. of Bilgram.
T. A. S. pp. 123a and b; S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letters 120, 122, 126.

Before Shuja-ud-daulah's arrival at Sandi the Wazir, who was the guardian and chief adviser of the princes, had sent an envoy, probably calling upon the former to submit to the Emperor's representatives and pay the state revenue like a loyal vassal ; but the envoy was for some time detained by Anup Giri in his camp at Dauganj and afterwards sent back to the imperialists. Evidently a little later, messages had been exchanged between the parties, but the stiff attitude of Shuja-ud-daulah led to a breakdown of the negotiations and the princes sent their advance-tents ahead on 7th June and proceeded against him on the 8th. The Ruhelas now effected a junction with them, and they all encamped on the eastern bank of the Ramganga river. Shuja-ud-daulah on his part left Sandi, crossed the Garra and set up his encampment on its right bank opposite to the town and erected entrenchments round the camp. Now, the distance between the opposing forces was hardly 14 to 16 miles.[1] As the plain between the Ramganga and the Garra, from Sandi in the east to the eastern bank of the Ramganga in the west, is hardly 9 miles wide, the princes' encampment must have been set up at a point on the Ramganga due east of Fatehgarh and 14 miles or so to the north-west of Shuja-ud-daulah's position.

5. Strength of the Rival Forces

A contemporary chronicler of the Mughal court asserts in general terms, without definitely recording the numerical strength of Shuja-ud-daulah's army, that he advanced with "a numerous army and artillery and countless followers". But we know from the equally contemporary Marathi sources that he had begun his march from Lucknow with 10,000 troops and 2 to 3 hundred guns of all calibre. It is obvious that some 5,000 troopers must have joined him during his journey from Lucknow to Sandi, for we are told by the Maratha envoy Ragho Laxman, who was then present with Shuja-ud-daulah, that when the Nawab arrived at the latter place his force numbered 15 to 16 thousand troops and 3 to 4 hundred guns.

1 T. A. S. p. 123b ; S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 126.

Add to it 10,000 men under Anup Giri Gosain sent ahead as advance-guards, and we have 25,000 soldiers and 7 to 8 hundred guns, big and small—the figures given as the total strength of Shuja-ud-daulah's forces by the Maratha agent at the former's court in his letter to Raghunath Rao, dated, 19th June, 1757. Despite its numerical strength this army could hardly be reckoned as a powerful instrument of war. The Nawab himself, being extremely licentious, practically left his troops to their own fate, and the pay of his gunners was 2 to 4 months in arrears. Under these circumstances they could not be expected, as the shrewd Maratha wakil had definitely noted, to put up a brave fight and to sacrifice their lives for the sake of a careless and debauched master.[1]

From the point of view of military organisation, equipment and even numerical strength, the Delhi army was no better. The princes, in spite of their high pretensions, possessed no troops of their own, and mainly relied for support on Imad-ul-mulk and Ahmad Khan Bangash, both of whom had fallen on evil days and were utterly unfit to play the role of commanders and conquerors. The Wazir's private army numbered 4,000, and the Bangash Nawab was the lord of not more than 5 to 7 thousand Afghans. The best portion of the enemy force was that under Jangbaz Khan ; but numerically his contingent was practically negligible, numbering as it did from 2 to 3 thousand men in all. Hence the total strength of the Delhi armament came up to between 12 and 14 thousand, as is clearly put by Ragho Laxman, who was in a position to know the truth. The Ruhelas were believed by many an observer to have been friendly to the imperialists and the forces of the two when added together raised their number from 30 to 40 thousands. Imad-ul-mulk was bound to sustain defeat as the observant eye of the Maratha agent did not fail to see,[2] if the Ruhela hosts remained neutral at the time of engagement—a thing more probable than any other under the circumstances.

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[1] S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letters 126, 150, 128, 120.

[2] S. P. D. Vol. II, letters 172, 72 ; Vol. XXI, letters 126, 128, 132 ; Vol. XXVII, letter 173.

6. Light Fighting and Peace, June 1757

Now that the rival forces had drawn so close to each other, there was daily apprehension of a battle and it seemed that the final contest could not be postponed indefinitely. At this critical juncture, when the war clouds had completely darkened the horizon, there appeared near the Ruhela encampment Sadullah Khan, chief of Aonla and Bangarh. A personal friend of Shuja-ud-daulah, he had hastened to the scene of action to make an endeavour to end the war before the parties had flown at the throat of each other. He sent his agents to Shuja-ud-daulah with overtures of peace, instructing them to bring a man of note from the latter for negotiation. They returned with Salar Jang, wife's brother of Shuja-ud-daulah, on or about 7th June, and peace talks began in right earnest. Salar Jang interviewed the Wazir on the 11th and waited on the princes the same day. Mirza Baba and Hidayat Bakhsh paid visits to Sadullah Khan and Dunde Khan in the latter's camp, which were duly returned. But the good effects of the negotiations were marred by a sudden outbreak of hostilities. A foraging party of Jangbaz Khan's contingent having come in touch with the Awadh vanguard under the Gosain, who drove off some of the former's camels, two light engagements took place between the skirmishers of the rival forces without any decisive advantage to either side. The Afghan foragers returned to their camp, while Anup Giri's division remained in their original place.[1] Shuja-ud-daulah did not seem inclined to a friendly settlement of the dispute and he told Ragho Laxman with an earnestness that carried conviction that he was "only passing time (in negotiations) in anticipation of the arrival of your army." Imad-ul-mulk continued insisting on the payment of 10 to 20 lakhs of rupees[2] in cash, while

[1] S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 126 ; T. A. S. p. 123b ; Delhi Chronicle, 140 ; S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 129 ; Samin in I. Antiquary 1907, p. 67 ; Sair, III. 899.

[2] S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letters 126 and 135 ; Vol. XXVI, letter 181.

The following Marathi letter addressed to Raghunath Rao, probably by Ragho Laxman, in June, 1757, admir-

the Bangash chief, who was casting covetous eyes on the dominion of Awadh, was bitterly opposed to any proposal for

bly illustrates the nature and course of Shuja-ud-daulah's negotiations with the Marathas :—The Nawab (Shuja-ud-daulah) was determined to call the Marathas and punish his enemy (with their help). You (Raghunath Rao) sent Sakha Ram Bapu, Gangadhar Pant Tatiya, Vithal Shivadeva and Antaji Mankeshwar at the head of 25,000 troops to the Doab to chastise the ruler of Farrukhabad. This army has entered into the Doab. The Nawab (Shuja-ud-daulah) requested me to write to the leaders (of this army) to summon their troops. So I wrote to Bapu and Tatiya informing them that the Nawab was awaiting their arrival. Your own (Raghunath's) letter came to the Nawab apprising him that you had despached four chiefs with 25,000 troops to the Doab and asking him to join them and punish the enemy. Accordingly the Nawab wrote to Bapu and Tatiya to come up immediately so as to combine their forces and defeat the enemy. After this another letter was sent to them (by Shuja-ud-daulah) requesting them to come quickly to Mahdighat, which is near Qanauj, and cross the Ganga there.........Bapu and Tatiya replied to my letter that they were 8 to 10 stages away (from me) and that it would take them five to seven days to reach me. They added, "If the fighting is over or peace is made before we arrive, then what is the use of our coming ? If the Nawab desires us to come, then ask him to gain time prolonging the negotiations about eight days, by which time we shall arrive." I said to the Nawab that if peace were made while the army was still on the way, then what would it do after coming here. Thereupon replied the Nawab, "You are not believing me. If you believe me, be sure, that I will not make peace. I am only awaiting your (army's) arrival." The Nawab has now sent Bhawani Das, sister's son of Trimbak Das, to Bapu and Tatiya and it is now six days since he had gone. By this time he must have reached Bapu and the army must be coming to this place. The Nawab has written to them that "till your arrival I am prolonging the negotiations. After you have come I shall do what you decide." The Nawab is earnestly anxious for making an agreement (with the Marathas) and this depends upon his meeting with Bapu. Our army may arrive here in eight days......(S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 135).

accommodation. Hence after five days' useless stay in the Ruhela camp, Salar Jang returned to his own, bringing with him Maha Narayan (Man Rai ?) and Haji Ahmad Pirzada. Shuja-ud-daulah now exchanged his turban with that of Sadullah Khan in token of friendly regard and brotherhood, and the latter and his partisans Dunde Khan and Sardar Khan resolved not to become friendly with the Wazir until he had agreed to make peace with the Nawab of Awadh. Meanwhile the Maratha army under Sakha Ram Bapu crossed the Yamuna near Agra and reached and encamped at Kasganj on the 7th June, 1757 (29th Ramzan, 1170 A. H.). Before entering into the Doab Sakha Ram had deputed three groups of troops to three different destinations—the first under Antaji Mankeshwar marched to Delhi, the second under Trimbak Mukund proceeded for the camp of the Wazir and the third under Gopal Rao Ganesh marched towards Shuja-ud-daulah, the latter two having been charged with the mission of forcing the contesting parties to come to a speedy settlement between them.[1]

The arrival of the Maratha army, which exerted great pressure from Kasganj, 67 miles north-west of Farrukhabad (by road), brought about a change in the situation and attitude of the combatants, and Trimbak Rao and Gopal Rao were able to enforce a cessation of hostilities on the parties and compel Imad-ul-mulk to agree to a treaty. The Emperor Alamgir II had already written a special note to Shuja-ud-daulah (received on 18th June) informing him that he had ordered the Wazir not to force war, and therefore the negotiations that were going on ended in Shuja-ud-daulah's promise to pay fifteen lakhs of rupees, five of which were to be paid immediately and the balance of ten at the end of one year. On this basis a peace was finally concluded. The understanding among the imperialists was that the first instalment of five lakhs would be divided in two equal parts, of which the first moiety

S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 130. This letter says that Shuja-ud-daulah exchanged turbans with Dunde Khan and Sardar Khan also.

(2½ lakhs) would be delivered to Jangbaz Khan while the second would be further split up into five equal shares (of 50,000 rupees each), one share going to each of the remaining five notables, namely, Prince Hidayat Bakhsh, Mirza Baba, Imad-ul-mulk, Ahmad Khan Bangash and Mir Yahiya Khan.[1]

In fulfilment of the terms of the treaty Shuja-ud-daulah sent to the Wazir one lakh of rupees in cash, promising to pay off the balance of the first instalment (4 lakhs) in fifteen days' time.[1] Sadullah Khan pledged his word as a surety for the payment in due time. The princes, the Wazir and the Bangash chief now struck their camp on 23rd June and marched back to Farrukhabad without waiting to receive the sum promised. Sadullah Khan ordered his army back to Aonla, and he himself with a light escort marched to Sandi to pay Shuja-ud-daulah a visit. They parted the next day, the former returned to Ruhelkhand and the latter began his return journey to Lucknow on 27th June (9th Shawwal).[2]

At Farrukhabad the princes disbanded their newly enlisted levies with whose help they had vainly hoped to administer Awadh and Allahabad, and on 4th July (16th Shawwal) they began their weary march homeward in the same abject poverty which had haunted them since their departure from Delhi three and a half months before. Shuja-ud-daulah did not care to keep his promise of paying the balance (four lakhs) of the first instalment ; and hence the princes got not a single pie from him. None other except Jangbaz Khan fared better. The Khan had already received the whole of the only lakh paid by Shuja-ud-daulah, and now growing furious for the balance he marched to Bareli, surrounded the house of Sadullah's diwan Man Rai and extorted the sum, for his master had stood surety

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1 Ibid. Vol. II, letter 76 ; Vol. XXVII, letter 182 ; Vol. XXI letter 132 ; Vol. XXVII, letter 79 ; Vol. XXI, letter 135 ; Vol. XXVII, letter 181 ; T.A.S. p. 124a ; Samin, in Ind. Antiq. 1907, p. 68.

2 Samin Ind. Antiq. 1907, p. 69. Gulistan-Rahmat, p. 54.

for it. He then returned to Kabul, and "not a copper of it was recovered from Nawab Shuja-ud-daulah."[1]

7. Shuja-ud-daulah in Lucknow

Freed from danger, Shuja-ud-daulah, on his return to Lucknow at the end of June 1757, again relapsed into his former degrading vices of sloth and debauchery. We have it on the authority of an important eye-witness, Raghava Lakshman, the Maratha envoy at his court, that the Nawab's excesses in venery and indifference to business now reached such a pitch that his mother had to interfere and give him a good deal of sound advice and used her influence to get thirty of his courtesans dismissed from his service. But he would not part with four or five whom he admitted into his *harem* (seraglio) as his wives[2] or concubines. Evidently there was confusion in the administration of the two provinces; for such conduct in a ruling prince could hardly inspire loyalty among his vassals and subjects and conduce to discipline and efficiency among his officers and troops. The historian is indebted to the Maratha envoy referred to for the information that during Shuja-ud-daulah's temporary absence in the defensive campaign against Imad-ul-mulk, some of the big landlords in his dominion had driven out his revenue collectors (*amils*) from their *Taluqas* in different parts of the *Subahs* in utter defiance of the Nawab's authority, even before fighting had begun, as "there is no proper management (*bandobast*) in (his) country."[3] As Shuja-ud-daulah did not stir out of

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[1] The most important authorities for this chapter are :—
T.A.S., pp. 109 b, 118 a, 118 b, 121 b-124 b ; S.P.D. Vol. II, letters 72, 76, 79 ; Vol. XXI, letters 114, 116, 117, 120-122, 123, & 125-135; Vol. XXVII, letters 146, 161, 170, 172, 173, 181, 182 & 190 ; Rajwade, Vol. VI, letters 577, 578 ; Delhi Chronicle, pp. 113, 114 & 140 ; Sair, III, p. 899 ; Gul-i-R, pp. 52-54 (partial for Hafiz) ; Samin in Ind. Antiq. 1907, pp. 64-70 (at places full of gossip and mis-statements) ; Haricharan, 431b-432a ; Maadan, Vol. IV, pp. 189b-190a; T. Muzaffari, 177b.

[2] S. P. D. Vol. XXVII, letter 191.

[3] S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 128.

Lucknow for some months after his return from the campaign against the Delhi army, it may be conjectured, in the absence of definite evidence, that these rebellions were possibly suppressed by detachments of the army sent from Lucknow or Faizabad. Khwajah Tamkin, who had for certain unrecorded reasons been obliged to resign the post of *Naib* (deputy-governor), was now reappointed, due probably to the insistence of the Dowager Begum, and oblivious though he usually was of his duties, Shuja-ud-daulah proposed early in July a very healthy administrative reform, namely that of confiscating all the free-grant lands (jagirs) and compensating the grantees by substituting cash payments from the treasury.[1] Unluckily nothing is on record to show whether this important measure was put in practice in all his dominions now.

It is, however, certain that Shuja-ud-daulah did enforce it some time later by escheating to the state all the jagirs in his *Subahs* and stopping even cash payments given as subsistence allowance.[2] With no outside power threatening his dominion, Shuja-ud-daulah was no longer very anxious to conclude an alliance with the Marathas ; but the latter being desirous of humouring him to remain neutral, while they endeavoured to recover their possessions in the Doab, still continued negotiations. The trans-Ganga Ruhelas displayed an equal eagerness for a defensive alliance with Awadh. The fresh solemn renewal of friendship between Imad-ul-mulk and the Marathas created great misgivings in the minds of Hafiz Rahmat and other Ruhela chiefs, and they proposed to Shuja-ud-daulah that unless they entered into a definite agreement for the defence of their common frontier it was impossible for either of them separately to be able to successfully withstand an aggression from the united might of the Wazir and the Deccanis. The proposal, however, fell through owing to Shuja's distrust of the Ruhelas and the Maratha hostility to any grouping of

[1] S. P. D. Vol. XXVII, letter 101.
[2] Sair, III, p. 940 ; Tabsir, p. 682.

powers against them.[1] Despite the utter indifference of the Nawab's court, Sakha Ram Bapu's advice to return to him immediately, and his own confirmed opinion that an agreement with Shuja-ud-daulah appeared well-nigh impossible, Raghava Lakshman continued to reside at the latter's court, and the Nawab eventually agreed to bear the expenses of fifty troopers, who formed part of the Maratha Resident's establishment.[2] Gopal Rao Ganesh, who had been despatched to Shuja-ud-daulah early in June last with the mission of bringing about a cessation of hostility between the former and Imad-ul-mulk, now joined Raghava Lakshman at Lucknow and negotiations continued till the end of the third week of August, when it was decided that Shuja-ud-daulah should settle the terms of the proposed alliance in a personal interview[3] with Raghunath Rao who was on his way from Jaipur to Delhi. Accordingly the Nawab made preparations for a journey to the imperial capital and sent Ali Beg Khan, a trusty officer of his, ahead with the Maratha envoy. In partial fulfilment of the Maratha demand as a preliminary to the proposed alliance, Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to cede to them the Parganah of Sangrur,[4] and then he got ready to begin his intended march. A little later the *Sanad* for the holy Kashī (Banaras) which the Peshwa had been very anxious to possess, was also made over to the Maratha agent.[4] But Raghunath Rao, who was maturing his plans for re-establishing Maratha supremacy over Delhi and conquering the Punjab, suddenly changed his mind and wrote to Gopal Rao to put him off by negotiations.[5] This led to an abrupt termination of the talks[6] and Shuja-ud-daulah

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1 S P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 134.
2 S. P. D. Vol. XXVII, letter 191.
3 S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 124.
4 S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 124. The Sanad for this Parganah was prepared and delivered to Gopal Rao Ganesh ; but for some days it remained incomplete for, owing to a fall from his horse, Khwajah Tamkin, the Naib, broke his arm and could not affix his seal to it.
5 S. P. D. Vol. XXI, letter 124 ; Vol. XXVII, letter 202.
6 S. P. D. Vol. XXVII, letters 202 & 203.

hereafter never entered into any alliance with the Marathas. The latter nevertheless gained the immediate object they had at heart, and the Awadh neutrality enabled them to recover their lost possessions in the tract between the Ganga and the Yamuna.

chapter Four

Shah Alam's Wanderings ; Fate of Muhammad Quli Khan.

1. Epoch of 1756-58

The years 1756-58 mark an epoch of extraordinary importance in the history of India. It was during this period that those events which were ultimately to sweep off the Mughal rule from this land and confer the highly coveted diadem of India on a handful of adventurers from beyond the seas were slowly and imperceptibly taking shape. Wazir Imad-ul-mulk's manifest incapacity and rank selfishness, his want of patriotism and abject servility to the Marathas, tore the already crumbling fabric of the Empire to shreds, bringing upon the Government complete financial bankruptcy and reducing the Emperor to a mere cypher even in the management of his palace fort or his own household. Backed by the Maratha sword, he replaced Najib-ud-daulah, the only Muslim noble capable of commanding allegiance from the vassals and subjects of the Empire, as the sole director of the administration, and drove him to his jagir in the Najibabad and Saharanpur districts. Quickly did his Deccan allies follow this success by marching into the heart of the Punjab and wresting the province from the Abdali's son and the latter's guardian in April, 1758. Then came the turn of the heir-apparent to the Mughal throne. Pursued by the Wazir's vulgar ambition and relentless ferocity, Ali Gauhar, the Crown Prince, was compelled to flee from Delhi in May, 1758, and seek safety in exile. These foolish measures brought down upon the head of Imad-ul-mulk and his confederates the wrathful

invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali and led to a prolonged Maratha-Abdali contest for mastery over the Punjab and paramountcy over Hindusthan, culminating finally in the famous battle of Panipat two years later. The repeated Afghan invasions, the fatal impotence of the imperial phantom at Delhi, and the utter indifference of Indian notables to imperial interests due to a shameful scramble for power and the loaves and fishes of office, made it impossible for the central Government to take notice of the political revolution in Bengal, a revolution which enabled the English merchants to make a successful bid for the position of 'King-makers' in Bengal-cum-Bihar and to use the power thus acquired so cleverly as to be able to throw subsequently the net of their supremacy over the whole land. Little did our ignorant and mutually quarrelling rulers realise the significance of the activities of the English East India Company's agents and much less the extent and meaning of their political and territorial ambition, concealed as it was perhaps unintentionally under the cover of their daily mercantile routine. Shuja-ud-daulah and Surajmal, Imad-ul-mulk and Najib-ud-daulah, Raghunath Rao and Malhar Rao Holkar, each and all unaccustomed to take long views and ever subordinating the interests of the country to their personal tribal or sectional gains, failed to appreciate the trend of the epoch-making events happening at this juncture in the country in general and in Bengal in particular.

2. Shah Alam's Flight and His Reception by Shuja, 1758—59.

Re-installed with Maratha help and freed from the rivalry of Najib's towering genius (who was banished to his jagirs). the intriguing Wazir now set to work to hound his other rivals, real or fancied. to death. Smaller courtiers and lordlings could easily be overawed into submission ; but Imad looked upon Shuja-ud-daulah and the heir to the imperial throne, Shah Alam, as the two chief sources of future danger for the prepetuation of his absolute dictatorship. As his recent experience had shown the futility of force against Shuja, he now followed the policy of isolating him completely and striking

quickly at all those nobles or lesser personages who were suspected of having intimate connections with him. Accordingly on 3rd March, 1758, the Wazir contrived the arrest of Lutf-ullah Beg and Maulvi Qasim Kashmiri on the alleged charge of conspiring with Shuja, through Sher Jang, a nephew of the late Burhan-ul-mulk, to bring about a political revolution in the capital.[1] This done, he turned to Shah Alam, whom he recalled from his estates in the Rohtak and Hisar districts and endeavoured to capture and put under surveillance. The Prince with his hundred devoted followers cut his way gallantly through the ranks of his besiegers and fled from Delhi to the Ruhela country (May 1758). At Miranpur he received a pressing invitation[2] from Muhammad Quli Khan, deputy-governor of Allahabad, who pledged his support in an expedition for the conquest of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa which had just emerged from the travail of a political revolution and were suffering badly from its after-effects. Having accepted the proposal, he resumed his journey, and travelling through Ruhelkhand, marched towards Awadh *en route* for Allahabad.

On Shah Alam's near approach, Shuja-ud-daulah who had already been apprised of the prince's intended visit to his capital, marched out of Lucknow and received him four miles in advance with all the ceremony and respect due to his high rank on 2nd January, 1759 (3rd Jamadi I.).[3] He presented to him one hundred and one *asharfis*[4] (gold coins)

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1 T. A. Sani, 152b.
2 Sair, II, 656-7 ; Vol. III, p. 906.
3 T. A. Sani, p. 192b ; Ghulam Ali, Vol. I. p. 66, has 8th. Jamadi I ; Sair, III, p. 906 ; Maadan, Vol. IV, p. 203a ; T. M. 192, have 9th Jamadi I ; Haricharan, 434b, gives no date. I accept the date given by T. A. Sani, the court chronicle of the time.
4 T. A. Sani, p. 192b, says that he presented one hundred asharfis while other authorities like Sair, T. M., Maadan etc., say 101. There is no doubt they are right and the omission of the word one in the T. A. S. might be due to the copyist's negligence. It was the practice to make an offering of 101, 51, 21, 7, etc.—odd numbers and not even.

and a carved and furnished palanquin, while the offerings (*nazr*) made by his attendants and officers amounted to seventy two *asharfis*. After the reception was over, Shuja-ud-daulah conducted him into an extensive and newly prepared tent, set up for the purpose, and lodged him there. A variety of entertainments was given in the prince's honour, and the Nawab further made him a present of one lakh of rupees in hard cash, two elephants with covered *amaris*, one palanquin, seven horses, a trayful of jewels, some precious stuffs of various kinds, weapons, tents, vessels of gold and silver and ten waggons.[1] At the time of his departure Shah Alam remained closeted with Shuja-ud-daulah for about two hours, and then began his march towards Allahabad.

It is certain that during the course of this confidential consultation the scheme of an expedition to Patna as a preliminary to the conquest of Bengal, which had recently caught the prince's fancy, was discussed and decided upon. Shuja-ud-daulah, who had zealously encouraged his cousin Muhammad Quli Khan, an ambitious youth devoid of intelligence but not of courage and personal bravery, to invite the prince from Miranpur and make use of his name and prestige to conquer Bengal, was supremely interested in the initial stages of this enterprize, if not in its ultimate end. Not that he was at this time of his career

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1 Sair, III, 906 ; Maadan, Vol. IV, 203a ; T. M. 192a (4 elephants and 30 to 40 camels). According to T. A. Sani, p. 199a, the presents made this time were fifty thousand rupees in cash and a few elephants and horses. My reason for preferring Sair's version is the fact that Ghulam Husain's father was then one of the highest officers in the service of Shah Alam and hence he was in a better position to know the truth than the court chronicler writing from distant Delhi. Imad, p. 69, puts the cash presents at the exaggerated figure of seven lakhs of rupees ; C. P. C., Vol. I, p. I. mentions presentation of elephants ; Marathi news-letter from the Hyderabad court dated 21-3-1759 says that Shuja presented 5 lakhs of rupees, 10 elephants and 10 horses. (S. P. D. XXI., L. 169).

at all anxious to extend his frontier eastward and augment his resources by acquiring a share in the proposed conquest of Bengal-cum-Bihar. The innermost desire of his heart, to the realisation of which he had been looking forward for years together, undoubtedly was to oust his cousin from Allahabad by taking advantage of his absence in the intended campaign in Bihar. Muhammad Quli Khan's position was an anomalous one. He was deputy-governor of Allahabad on behalf of Shuja-ud-daulah and also his first cousin and vassal. But the Mughal Government under the dictatorship of Imad-ul-mukh, a hereditary enemy to the ruling house of Awadh, was positively hostile to the latter (Shuja) and recognised the former (Muhammad Quli) as governor of that province and designated him as such in official papers and correspondence, which was intolerable to the pride of Shuja-ud-daulah and wholly opposed to the unity and consolidation of his dominions. As for Shah Alam, the Nawab was reluctant to allow him an asylum in his *Subahs*, as his permanent abode in his country was likely to minimise his own authority and prestige. Hence during the course of the private conversation with the prince he dwelt, it may be easily imagined, on the advisability of his undertaking the campaign against Patna. Shuja-ud-daulah promised assistance to the prince and pledged that he would join him shortly after[1]. He issued orders in the name of Muhammad Quli Khan and Balwant Singh of Banaras, calling upon them to make suitable arrangements for the reception and entertainment of the Prince and to *escort him with a part of their armies to the frontier of Allahabad Subah if he were to march against Patna.*[2]

This accorded well with the views and ambition of Shah Alam whose cherished object was to carve out for himself a

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[1] Sair, II, pp. 656, 658. It says that Shuja encouraged and emboldened the prince to undertake the expedition by informing him that he had promised Muhammad Quli Khan to assist him in the expedition.

[2] See T. A. Sani, p. 199 a.

kingdom in Bengal, far away from the reach of the inimical Wazir. So he set out, enlisting fresh troops and making new friends on his way from Lucknow, and by the time he reached the village of Jhusi[1] (23rd January) on the Ganga, opposite to Allahabad fort, he found himself at the head of a big crowd of men. Here Muhammad Quli Khan welcomed him with cordiality and respect, made him a present of one hundred and one gold coins (mohars) and joined him with all his troops[2] A few days after Balwant Singh followed suit and besides a present of 101 mohars assisted him with two lakhs of rupees,[3] as also did other important zamindars of the locality. With this strange motley of men, composed of well-armed troops of Allahabad and Banaras and the disorderly rabble that had flocked to him on the way, Shah Alam advanced eastward, financing the enterprise by seizing a few thousands of rupees from the bankers[4] from Patna and with the subsidies and presents of the vassals and zamindars of the neighbourhood.

3. Wazir's Plans to Frustrate Shah Alam

As Shah Alam advanced eastward of Banaras, he issued *farmans* in the names of Rajah Ram Narayan, Mir Jafar and Clive, calling upon the Rajah to come out of Patna and wait upon him like a loyal vassal and subject, and the latter to make preparations for his reception and for furnishing the tribute due from the three Subahs to the imperial treasury. This together with the exaggerated reports which magnified the strength and importance of his heterogeneous force commanded by a band of needy adventurers, created consternation in Patna and confusion and horror in the country-side through which he had to pass. It produced a sense of insecurity among merchants and bankers and interrupted the transport and flow of money from Bengal to the imperial capital, and the circulation of *hundis* ceased automatically. Under these circumstauces Ram Prasad, the agent of the Jagat

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1 Ghulam Ali, Vol. I, p. 69.
2 T. A. Sani, p. 199a.
3 C. P. C. Vol. I. No. 58.
4 T. A. Sani, p. 199 b.

Seths of Murshidabad, who was also Vakil of Mir Jafar at the imperial court, expressed his utter inability to furnish money from the eastern provinces.[1] Greatly disturbed at this news, Imad-ul-mulk wrote to Shuja-ud-daulah, bitterly complaining against the latter's non-compliance with his request contained in his previous letter namely, not to afford any assistance to Shah Alam but to detain him if he repaired to Lucknow, and urging him once more to compel Muhammad Quli Khan to abandon the prince. Shuja-ud-daulah diplomatically replied that in spite of his constant anxiety to carry out the Wazir's wishes, he could not detain the royal fugitive who was not in the habit of staying at any one place for any length of time ; nor could he bring himself to refuse to receive him in a befitting manner, as it was highly improper to ill-treat a member of the royal family. As for Muhammad Quli, he was master of his own destiny, added he, and hence he had nothing to do with the Khan's vagaries. This silenced the Wazir who now played other tricks to frustrate Shah Alam by denouncing him as a rebel, appointing prince Hidayat Bakhsh to take charge of Bihar, urging Mir Jafar and Clive to make a bold stand against the royal refugee, and finally boasting openly that he would march out in person to bring him back a prisoner. But Shah Alam continued his advance without any real obstruction to his progress, and reached Daudnagar by 10th March.

4. Siege of Patna, March-April., 1759

Shah Alam's quick movement struck terror in Patna, and Rajah Ram Narayan, the deputy-governor, believing in the vague stories of imperial might and prestige, which he felt himself utterly unable to withstand, sent appeal after appeal, urging Mir Jafar and his master, the English governor of Fort William, to devise timely measures to check the coming storm before it burst on his capital. But, in spite of the fact that they were well-served by their spies who gave them the

C. P. C. Vol, I, Nos. 19, 38, 68, & 69 ; T. A. S., p. 199 b-200a ; Imad, 69 ; D. C. P. 162 ; T. A. S., p. 200 a. & b ; C. P. C., I, 123-125 ; T. A. S., p. 203 a.

earliest information of the prince's arrival near Lucknow, and thereafter regularly reported to them his every movement the English remained quite inert for some time, and they made no arrangements whatever for the defence of Bihar till Shah Alam had almost knocked at the very gates of the town of Patna. So systematically had Clive and his British colleagues carried on the work of spoliation at Murshidabad in return for their bestowal of the viceroyalty of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa on Mir Jafar that the latter's treasury had become completely empty and he had been saddled with an enormous debt in addition. The pay of the Bengal army had fallen into arrears for months together, and the English did not seem anxious to embark on a distant expedition, purely defensive though it might be, without the Nawab advancing them subsidies for their expenditure. However, better sense prevailed and Clive, after having successfully persuaded Mir Jafar not to buy off the invader by payment of black-mail,[1] began his march from Calcutta on 25th February with 450 Europeans and 2500 sepoys. He reached Qasimbazar on 8th March, and after effecting junction with the Nawab's army under Miran, he left Murshidabad for Patna on the 13th.[2] The English suspected the Jagat Seths, the richest bankers of Bengal, and not altogether without reason, to have been at the bottom of the coming invasion ; but they wisely refrained from alienating this important and powerful family, and the news of Clive's march was enough to silence the Seths into neutrality.

All this time Ram Narayan received no information whatever of Clive's start from Murshidabad, but the enemy was approaching fast. So he decided on accommodation and waited on the prince and his supreme adviser Muhammad Quli Khan at Phulwari, 7 miles west of Patna, after he had been forsaken by Amyatt, chief of the English factory who

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1 C. P. C., Vol. I, Nos. 25, 47, 56, 63, 80, 112 & 117, and 26.

2 Clive's letter to the Hon'ble Secret Committee, 12th March, 1759. Forrest, Clive, Vol. II, p. 129. Clive's letter to the Court of Directors, dated 12th March, 1759.

had left the town on the 15th March with all his officers. The Rajah was allowed to return to his lodgings to make an arrangement to furnish three krores of rupees that were demanded as tribute[1]. For two or three days the clever Rajah kept up the appearance of submission ; but as soon as he was in receipt of definite tidings of the near arrival of the Bengal army stiffened by some English troops under Clive, he turned out the prince's agents and ordered his men to man the city walls. The out-witted Khan now awoke to a sense of reality, and biting his lips in anger swore to make an example of the 'infidel'. Next morning (23rd) he besieged the town and fighting continued with varying fortune till the 5th April. The besieged were about to give way when they received the welcome news that the army of relief under Clive and Miran had already crossed the Sakrigali pass, the eastern frontier post of Bihar, and was quickly approaching Patna.[2] This put heart in them as it filled the beleaguering army with despondency. The prince's ranks were torn by mutual dissensions and bickerings, and his councils were distracted by want of unanimity among his officers, and the mere report of the approach of the disciplined English troops was enough to strike terror into the hearts of their leaders. Shah Alam and Muhammad Quli Khan raised the siege on the 5th April,[3] and resolved to retreat westward so as to avoid the risk of being intercepted

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[1] Hasting's letters of 31st January and 1st February, to Clive, quoted in Forrest's Life of Clive, Vol. II, p. 126 ; also a Marathi news-letter from the court of Hyderabad dated 21-3-1759, which reported that Hukum Chand, nephew of the Jagat Seth, came to see the prince and was said to have agreed to bear his expenses (of course of the invasion). S. P. D., Vol. XXI, letter No. 169. Amyatt's letter to Clive, dated 15th March, 1759 ; Sair, II, 66 ; T. A. S., 205a ; Sair, II, 663-4 ; T. M., 192b.

[2] Ghulam Ali, Vol. I, p. 84 ; T. A. S., p. 206a ; Sair, II, 669 ; C. P. C., Vol. I, No. 202, T. S. A., 205b ; Sair, II, 669 ; S. M., 193a.

[3] For the Siege see, Sair, II, 664-669 ; T. A. S., 205b-206a ; Ghulam Ali, I, 74-84 ; T. M., 193 ; C. P. C., Vol. I, 202.

between the two enemy forces—Ram Narayan's troops from the fort and the English army from the east.

5. Shah Alam's Movements After His Retreat

The baffled imperialists retraced their steps backwards and would not be persuaded by Jean Law who met them on the way to renew their attempt on Patna. Muhammad Quli had received alarming reports of Shuja-ud-daulah's having perfidiously seized the Allahabad fort and made his family and dependants prisoners, and the only project that now absorbed the Khan's attention was the recovery of his people and territory. The prince frankly confessed that without Muhammad Quli's financing the enterprize, it was idle to think of renewing the siege. Some days after, however, backed by the financial and military support of Pahalwan Singh, the zamindar of Bhojpur, the prince resumed his operations; but they being in the nature of desultory warfare did not prove effective.[1] By this time Clive with his European troops had reached Saseram and was very near the frontier of Allahabad. He had written to Shah Alam as early as 30th April, in answer to the latter's epistle, "I am on my march to the Karmanasa, and earnestly recommend it to you to withdraw before I arrive there." With the assistance of Ram Narayan, he now detached Pahalwan Singh from the prince by re-instating him in the zamindari of Bhojpur and by restoring the jagir of his friend Ghulam Husain the historian. Forsaken by Pahalwan, Shah Alam found himself utterly unable to stir up against his enemies. He remained encamped at Mirzapur till the 27th June, when he left it for Rewa in response to an invitation from the Rajah of that place and spent the next four months of the rainy season there.[2]

6. Correct Estimate of Shah Alam's First Invasion of Bihar

Thus ended in utter failure Shah Alam's first invasion of Bihar, not because of Clive's "daring and confidence" and his

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[1] T. A. S., pp. 207a-209a.

[2] Forrest's Clive, Vol. II, p. 137; Sair, II, 674; Ghulam Ali, Vol. I.

"marvellous success" to which "seemed to belong a supernatural prestige"[1] as Sir George Forrest, his latest biographer would have us believe, but due to the inherent weakness in the position of the prince himself. No body can doubt Clive's greatness as a general. He was great in war and greater still in diplomacy. But it is a travesty of truth to ascribe to him the success of this campaign in such hyperbolical language. It is extremely doubtful if Shah Alam could have afforded to prolong the siege of Patna by a fortnight, even if Clive had not advanced to its relief. Haunted by complete financial bankruptcy, and dependent on Muhammad Quli Khan's liberality not only for subsidy for his troops but also for his daily expenses, it was beyond his strength to have continued the siege after the latter's withdrawal from the field consequent on the fatal blow inflicted upon him by his kinsman of Awadh, even if other important causes, such as his own inexperience of war and diplomacy, heterogeneity of his troops, absence of unanimity among his officers, want of a well-thought-out and vigorously pursued plan of military operations, and finally the relentless hostility of the Wazir and the Delhi Government's denunciation of him as a rebel, had not been operating simultaneously and had not reduced the chances of his success to zero. It should be borne in mind that these causes are more emphasised upon by the contemporary writers, such as Ghulam Husain Khan, Muhammad Ali Ansari and the Court Chronicler of the Delhi Emperor, than the timely arrival of the army of relief from Murshidabad and Calcutta. Nor is the statement that "His (Clive's) career is a record of expedition begun against odds, maintained vigorously, and with success in the end,"[2] made in connection with this expedition altogether free from exaggeration. Clive was fully aware of the hopelessness of the prince's position, and he wrote to Mir Jafar as early as 11th February, 1759, "what will be said, if the great Jaffar Ali Khan, Subah of this provincc who commands an army of

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[1] Forrest's, Clive, Vol. II, p. 137.
[2] Forrest's, Clive, Vol. II, p. 131, 127; C.P.C., Vol. I, No. 26.

sixty thousand men, should offer money to *a boy who has* scarce a soldier with him ?" Shah Alam possessed at the highest estimate a crowd of 40,000 men, though according to Clive his total strength was only 30,000, while the English governor had begun his march from Calcutta at the head of 450 Europeans and 2500 sepoys[1] and was joined by Miran near Murshidabad with "a considerable portion" of the Nawab's army, which could not have been less than 40,000 strong. These figures unmistakably show that the army of relief was numerically superior to Shah Alam's force, even though we may altogether omit to take into account the troops of Rajah Ram Narayan who, a clever diplomat that he was, was not expected, and Clive could not have failed to perceive it, to throw in his lot with the hopelessly weak side of the impoverished and exiled prince. Assuming that everything in this campaign depended upon numerical superiority and nothing on military training, discipline and generalship and the quality and nature of weapons and other appliances of war, even then the chances of success were on the side of Clive, as he wrote to Ram Narayan on 20th March, "What power has the Shahzada to resist the united forces of the Nawab and the English ?"[2] Evidently the importance of Shah Alam's first invasion of Bihar has been grossly exaggerated and along with it the magnitude and significance of Clive's success.

7. Shuja-ud-daulah Captures Allahabad, April, 1759

Shuja-ud-daulah was secretly hostile to his cousin Muhammad Quli Khan alias Mirza Kochak, deputy-governor of Allahabad. As the Khan enjoyed a status above that of a servant or a dependant, wielded the power of a semi-independent prince, and was recognised *governor* by the Delhi Government, he was clearly a stumbling block in Shuja-ud-daulah's policy of the administrative unity and political solidarity of his provinces. He had provoked the young Nawab's implacable

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[1] Forrest's, Clive, Vol. II, p. 131 ; Clive's letter to the Hon'ble the Secret Committee to the Court of Directors, dated 12th March, 1759.

[2] Quoted in Forrest's Clive, Vol. II, p. 131.

enmity by intriguing with the powerful Mughalia troops at Faizabad and had unwisely accepted their invitation to supplant Safdar Jang's only son in his inheritance of Awadh in the very first year of Shuja-ud-daulah's accession, for he was the next claimant to it, being the second son of Safdar Jang's elder brother Mirza Muhsin. It was not unlikely that at any future date he might take advantage of some military reverse, popular disaffection or any other difficulty of Shuja-ud-daulah and set himself up as a rival to him. For all these reasons the latter had for long been on the look-out for a favourable opportunity to strike at his cousin and drive him out of Allahabad. (*Mudate bad khwah wa qasid awaragi Muhammad Quli Khan az Allahabad bud*). And as soon as one appeared to be in sight, he instigated Muhammad Quli Khan, as we have seen, to assist Prince Ali Gauhar with his troops to conquer Bihar and Bengal. In this his object, which he kept carefully concealed, was to secure the Khan's absence from Allahabad and to seize the fort and the province without having had to fight for them.[1] Muhammad Quli, a foolish though valorous youngman, fell into the trap so cleverly set by his deadly foe, and as he resolved to accompany the fugitive prince to Bengal, Shuja-ud-daulah, who had already expressed his intention, of course without wishing to carry it out, of joining the expedition soon after, requested him to permit his family to be lodged in the Allahabad fort during his absence from Awadh, there being no other fortress in his dominion, he urged, except Chunargarh, which, owing to its situation in the hilly tract, possessed bad climate and was hence unsuitable as an abode for the ladies of his *harem*. The unsuspecting Khan wrote out the 'permit' and sent it over to Shuja-ud-daulah, and instructed Mirza Najaf Khan, the commandant of the fort, to comply with the Nawab's wishes, as he was not only his first cousin but also master, and heir to all that he (Muhammad Quli) possessed.[2] After this Muhammad Quli accompanied the prince to Patna.

[1] Sair, Vol. II, p. 656.
[2] Sair, Vol. II, pp. 658-59.

Seeing Muhammad Quli Khan absorbed in the siege of Patna, several stages away from his capital, and realising that in the event of success his credit with the Mughal Crown Prince (the position of whose wazir he had already arrogated to himself) would go up still higher, Shuja-ud-daulah at the head of a powerful force marched to Allahabad with all possible expedition. Mirza Najaf Khan, a maternal uncle of Muhammad Quli and the future though temporary rejuvenator of the Mughal Empire in the early years of the 4th quarter of the 18th century, was in charge of the fort, and in spite of his master's instructions to the contrary he prepared to stand on defence. But he was easily duped by the cunning Nawab who solemnly declared that he had come with the professed object of lodging his family in the fort after which he would instantly proceed to Patna to reinforce the prince. This put Najaf Khan off his guard, and Shuja-ud-daulah, under the cover of escorting his ladies in, perfidiously captured the fort and made Najaf Khan and the family and dependants of Muhammad Quli Khan prisoners. All the treasure, furniture, artillery and other property belonging to the Khan passed into the hands of Shuja-ud-daulah. This took place[1] on 16th April, 1759.

8. Fate of Muhammad Quli Khan

The news of this calamity reached Muhammad Quli Khan in Bihar on the 20th and filled him with confusion and alarm. Without making unnecessary delay, he set out for his province on the 23rd, trusting that Shuja-ud-daulah would yet have some regard for the bond of consanguinity and might make amends for his recent crime. But his expectations were foredoomed to disappointment. Shuja-ud-daulah was bent upon the utter ruin of his cousin, and had already despatched his *Naib* Beni Bahadur with a contingent of troops to Banaras to prevent the Khan from crossing the Ganga and to bring him a prisoner. Raja Balwant Singh of Kashi

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1 Gulam Ali, I. 31-2; Mirat-i-Aftab Numa, 245 b; Sair, II. 669; Mutakherin, 200 a.

was directed to co-operate with the *Naib*. Having posted themselves on the bank of the Ganga, two miles east of Ramnagar, the two Rajas captured all the boats in the vicinity and obstructed traffic from one side of the river to the other. Meanwhile the prince's army on its way back from Patna crossed the Karamnasa and made its appearance in their neighbourhood. The Rajas gladly allowed Ali Gauhar and M. Law to pass unmolested on to Mirzapur, but they closely watched Muhammad Quli Khan and his followers who were not suffered to move a mile or two beyond Sarai Sayyid Razi, 14 miles east of Mughal Sarai (Ry. Junction). The stragglers from his camp were set upon, plundered and killed by the zamindars of Balwant Singh's territory. It became unsafe for wayfarers to pass, and the historian Ghulam Husain Khan, who happened to be then travelling from Patna to Banaras, was obliged to return from the Karamnasa, and when he ventured out again he was permitted to cross over to Banaras only under a strong escort after he had been strongly recommended by Pahalwan Singh of Bhojpur who was friendly to the two Rajas. Muhammad Quli was now utterly confounded and did not know how to save his head. Having foolishly rejected the sound proposal of some of his brave and devoted followers to cut his way through the enemy's forces, the only course left to him was to throw himself on the mercy of his foe. After a few days' inaction he applied to Beni Bahadur for permission to repair to Shuja-ud-daulah with a few of his men. The request was granted, and the misguided Khan, accompained by some twelve of his troopers and a few menial servants crossed the Ganga and set out to see his kinsman of Awadh, fondly depending upon his blood relationship with Shuja-ud-daulah and his assurances of his personal safety. As soon as his back we turned his army was dispersed and camp plundered by Shuj-ud-daulah's orders, none escaping the fearful butchery, perpetrated by Bani Bahadur and his partner, except those lucky few who had friends or relations in the Rajahs' camps or were themselves brave enough to fight their

way through. Meanwhile Muhammad Quli Khan himself had reached Shuja-ud-daulah, who caused him to be artfully arrested and sent under a strong guard to Lucknow in May, 1759. He was imprisoned in the fort of Jalalabad[1], the ruins of which can be seen near the modern Aish-bagh Railway Station, Lucknow, and which was founded by Safdar Jang after the name of Jalal-ud-din Haidar Shuja-ud-daulah.[2]

Now the whole of the province of Allahabad, except the *Sarkar* of Kalinjar (which belonged to the descendants of Chhatrasal Bundela), of which he had hitherto been the nominal master, passed under Shuja-ud-daulah's effective control. He appointed Baqa-ullah Khan as deputy governor of this *Subah* and Ghulam Husain Khan, a slave of his, as commandant of the Allahabad fort. Shuja-ud-daulah's administration seems to have been milder than that of Muhammad Quli Khan, who certainly charged heavier taxes from the Hindu pilgrims to the holy Prayag. We have it on the testimony of Trimbak Rao, an important Maratha eyewitness, that "the pilgrim's tax is not so exorbitant (literally annoying) as before"; and that Shuja-ud-daulah "charges a moderate tax". Those of the Deccani visitors to the sacred *Triveni* who brought introductory letters from the Peshwa were not molested at all.[3]

Although it involves a break in the chronological order, it is convenient to record here the sad end of Muhammad Quli Khan. Towards the end of April, 1761 when Shuja-ud-daulah was about to march towards Bihar to bring the Emperor Shah Alam from Patna, he ordered the assassination of this

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1 The fort is no longer in existence. The village now known as Jalalpur has become a Mohalla of the city of Lucknow.

2 Ghulam Ali, I, 86 ; Sair, II, 671-73 ; T. M., 193a ; Imad, 69 ; Balwant, 84-6. Ghulam Ali of Lucknow and author of *Imad*, like a partisan writer that he was, says that Shuja did not capture Allahabad by treachery ; it came into his prossession after Muhammad Quli's reverse and imprisonment (see *Imad*, p. 69).

3 S. P. D., Vol. XXI, L. 175.

high-born prisoner. This was promptly done. The Khan's dead body was thrown into the well outside Jalalabad fort, which was subsequently filled with earth and a tomb raised over[1] it. Such was the end of one who had once ruled with all the pageantry and power of a prince over a rich province of the Empire.

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[1] S. P. D., Vol. XXI, L. 206 ; Imad, 69. The latter says that Muhd. Quli was put to death at the time when Shuja was about to march to join the Abdali King at Panipat. I prefer the date given in the Marathi letter referred to, for it was written on 20th June, 1761, only a month and a half after the assassination of Md. Quli Khan.

chapter Five

Shuja-ud-daulah and the Maratha-Afghan Contest, 1759-1761

1. Maratha Policy in North India

The Maratha policy in Northern India during the years 1757-59 was extremely ambitious. Their dominion in Hindustan had grown out of an humble beginning, and now their idea of *Hindupat Padshahi* embraced the whole of the country including the north-western *Subah* of the Punjab and the eastern-most province of Bengal. By a special agreement[1] with the late Emperor Ahmad Shah and his Wazir Safdar Jang in April, 1752, the Peshwa had taken upon himself the responsibility of guarding the Mughal north-western frontier from the perpetual danger of an Afghan invasion in lieu of the imperial recognition of the Maratha claim to *Chauth* on almost all the provinces of the Empire. He had thus incurred the hostility of the Abdali monarch of Kabul who claimed that *Subah* (Punjab) as his by inheritance from Nadir Shah. Since that time the Marathas and the Afghans had entered the lists as two chief rivals for mastery over the Punjab and supremacy at Delhi. At this period the Mughal *Wazir* was a quiescent pliable tool in Maratha hands, ever ready to comply with their demands, for they were bolstering him up in his ministerial *Gaddi*. But the *Mir Bakhshi* Najib-ud-daulah was a secret supporter of the foreign invader with whom he was linked by racial and religious ties and with whose armed assistance he desired to establish his

[1] For this treaty and its provisions, etc., see my First Two Nawabs of Awadh, pp. 200-201.

own dominance at the court. Hence the first object of Maratha policy in 1757 was not only to humble Najib but also to cripple[1] him permanently so as to make him impotent for evil, and to let the friendly and pacific Imad-ul-mulk conduct the imperial administration peacefully in order to enable him to remit regularly to the Peshwa's treasury the money contribution which had been stipulated upon in return for the Maratha guarantee for his and his royal lord's safety. The next long-cherished desire of the Peshwa and his lieutenants in the north was the conquest of the Punjab and the bringing of it under effective Maratha control. Thirdly, Balaji Bajirao clearly saw that his supremacy in northern India could not be complete without the reduction of the rich eastern provinces of Bihar and Bengal. For the realisation of this last dream the Peshwa had three alternative schemes in his mind, and these he unfolded to Dattaji Sindhia, recommending him to adopt the one that might appear to him as the most feasible under the peculiar circumstances in the north, and bring a krore or two of rupees from the two *Subahs*. The first contemplated the putting of the Emperor and the Wazir at the head of an expedition and conquering the eastern provinces with the weight and prestige of their names ; the second urged the simultaneous march of two Maratha armies upon Bengal from two different directions, viz., the Sindhia from Delhi, and Raghunath Rao via Bundelkhand and Allahabad ; and the third recommended the formation of an alliance with Shuja-ud-daulah by promising him half of Bengal and Bihar, in case the Wazir refused to join the expedition, and undertaking the enterprise with his assistance.[2]

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1 The Peshwa wrote to Dattaji and Jankoji on 21st March, 1759 :—"Najib is wicked and a breaker of faith. Advancing him is like feeding a serpent with milk. He should be crushed." (See Aitihasik patren yadi wagaire lekh, L. No. 167). Peshwa's letter to Ramaji Anant, dated 2nd May, 1759 (see Aitihasik etc. No. 171) says "Najib is treacherous and half-Abdali."

2 Aitihasik patren, etc., letters, 166 & 167 ; S. P. D., Vol. XXI, L. 143, 167.

Closely connected with these schemes was the question of the settlement of the Maratha relations with Shuja-ud-daulah. Ever since the days of Safdar Jang the Peshwa's representatives had been anxious to secure the cession of the Hindu holy places (Allahabad, Banaras and Ayodhya in the Awadh dominion) by a friendly agreement and failing that by threat or force of arms. Safdar Jang had managed to evade compliance, for the cession was bound to create an *imperium in imperio.* But Shuja-ud-daulah, threatened by a combination of Wazir Imad-ul-mulk with Ahmad Khan Bangash and the Ruhela chiefs in April-June, 1757, had reluctantly promised, after much wavering, to cede Banaras and Ayodhya—a promise which he did not intend to fulfil. And two years passed by, but he did not yield possession to the Maratha agents. Balaji Bajirao was therefore repeatedly urging the Sindhias to induce Shuja-ud-daulah to make good his promise by surrendering the two towns referred to, and enter into a fresh agreement providing for the cession of Allahabad city also. The next important point recommended by the Peshwa was to approve of Shuja-ud-daulah's candidature for Wazirship, after which he had been hankering since the death of his father, and to elevate him to that post, if he paid fifty lakhs of rupees and ceded Banaras and Allahabad or fifty lakhs and at least Allahabad ; but the payment was not to be put off for 2 or 3 years. It must be made within six months.[1] If he did not wish to be appointed prime minister on the above mentioned conditions, then Dattaji was directed to wrest Allahabad from him by force, and if, finding himself thus threatened, Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to make over Banaras and Allahabad and pay a handsome amount of money in addition, then he should be appointed Mir Bakhshi in place of Najib-ud-daulah. And the third alternative suggested was to enlist the support of Shuja-ud-daulah in an expedition for the conquest of Bihar and Bengal by promising him half the share in the two provinces, when

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1 Peshwa's letter to Ramaji Anant, dated 23rd February, 1759, Aitihasik patren etc., Nos. 166, 167.

reduced, and in that case secure from him the cession of Banaras and Allahabad only.[1] In short, the object of the Maratha policy in 1759 was not only the acquisition by peaceful means or otherwise, of these three flourishing towns in Awadh, but also of bringing Shuja-ud-daulah under their effective political control.

2. The Siege of Shukartal.

In pursuance of this policy, the Marathas first of all subjugated the Punjab as a result of two well-planned expeditions (March 1758 and April-May 1759) and then proceeded to crush Najib. Realising that a regular invasion of his domain was imminent, the Ruhela chief with his characteristic foresight planned the defence of Shukartal, a low lying expanse of land many miles in area and situated on the western bank of the Ganga, about 16 miles east of Muzaffarnagar, and here he concentrated all his military resources, leaving his family and treasure at Najibabad under his son Zabita Khan. Surrounded on three sides by numerous deep and tortuous ravines and on the east by the mighty Ganga, Shukartal was marked out by Nature as a place of first class strategic importance, well-suited for warfare of a defensive character. Najib fortified it by erecting redoubts and setting up batteries all round it and by stationing mobile musketry on the two sides, namely, south and south-west, which alone were exposed to attack. Here early in July, 1759, Dattaji Sindhia with his sturdy force erected entrenchments, about two miles west of Shukartal and besieged Najib. The siege was protracted for three months, and Dattaji, realising the futility of this kind of warfare resolved to make a diversion on Najibabad. At his orders Govind Ballal with 10,000 light cavalry crossed the river a little south of Hardwar, 34 miles north of Shukartal, and after hustling out of the way a contingent of Pathans posted at Sabalgarh, a fortalice 10 miles north-west of Najibabad, made a sudden dash for

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[1] Peshwa's letter to Dattaji and Jankoji Sindhia dated 21-3-1759 and his letter to Ramaji Anant, dated 2-5-1759, Vide Aitihasik etc. Nos. 167 and 171.

Jalalabad, 2 miles south-west of Najib's capital. Fortunately Najib-ud-daulah's Ruhela kinsmen Sadullah Khan, Hafiz Rahmat and Dunde Khan had arrived in time and were encamped near Sabalgarh. Hence Gobind Ballal, instead of risking a battle with them, marched away in a south-westernly[1] direction, ravaging the country as far as the bridge-head opposite Shukartal and for a time cutting off supplies to the defenders and causing great want in their camp. Najib was reduced to great straits, and his followers were filled with alarm about the safety of their families. At this very moment news flashed of the arrival near Shukartal of the Awadh vanguard under Anup Giri Gosain, and it at once heightened the spirits of the besieged.

3. Shuja-ud-daulah comes to the Relief of Najib

Ever since war clouds threatened to darken his political horizon, Najib-ud-daulah had set to work to enlist the support of Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul and of his own important neighbours. Every month he sent men to Kabul to induce the Shah to come to his rescue, and he despatched messengers to his Ruhela kinsmen of Katehr and Farrukhabad and to Shuja-ud-daulah of Awadh, urging them to hasten to his assistance. But the Ruhela chiefs, feeling themselves sheltered by the mighty Ganga, sent evasive replies, and said to themselves that it was nothing short of madness on the part of Najib to have antagonised the Marathas in the hope of getting aid from Qandhar.[2] Eventually, however, Najib's repeated entreaties coupled with their own self-interest impelled Hafiz, Dunde and other Ruhela chiefs to agree to march up to Shukartal.

On receipt of appeals from Najib-ud-daulah, to which were added those from Dunde Khan, Hafiz Rahmat and other chiefs of Ruhelkhand, Shuja-ud-daulah promptly decided in

[1] For Sabalgarh see Survey of India Atlas, Sheet, 53k. The place is clearly mentioned in Gulistan Rahmat, tr. by Elliot (See p. 57). For the Siege see—T. Ahmad Shahi 210a-211b ; Nur-ud-din, 223a-226a ; Gulistan, 56-57 ; Sair, III, p. 906-7.

[2] Nur-ud-din, 23a.

favour of affording relief. His decision must have been influenced by the following important considerations. In the first place, the Marathas were the aggressors, while Najib was fighting in self-defence. Secondly, the Marathas were firm friends and allies of Imad-ul-mulk, a hereditary arch-enemy of the Awadh ruling family, and it was then almost universally believed that he had invited them from the Deccan to crush all his rivals, of course, including Shuja-ud-daulah. Thirdly, the Maratha policy, which had recently been fully unmasked, being nothing short of an unquestioned supremacy over the whole of Northern India, the overthrow of Najib was sure to be a prelude to the conquest of Ruhelkhand and Awadh, and the latter could not be expected to hold out long after the political destruction of the Indian Pathans, whose possessions were a sort of bulwark to Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion.[1] This last consideration, more than any other, made the Nawab determine to march to the relief of the hard-pressed brother Muslim chief and thereby earn his personal gratitude.

Leaving Lucknow in the beginning of the rainy season, Shuja-ud-daulah at the head of 5 to 6 thousand horse and 10 to 12 thousand foot marched to the western frontier of Awadh, while the Ruhela chiefs were still wavering, and finding the roads impassable due to rain and mud, he remained encamped near Shahabad in the modern Hardoi district for about three months of the rains. When the wet season was over and the roads became dry, he resumed his journey and entered Ruhelkhand. His arrival in their midst encouraged Hafiz Rahmat and other Ruhelas, who, though now anxious to go to Najib's help, could not venture out of their estates, so greatly were they inspired with Maratha fear. Now they united their forces with Shuja-ud-daulah's and advanced, from Bareilly in the direction of Shukartal. When they arrived at Hasanpur news came that a Maratha army had crossed the Ganga, and was making its way to Najibabad in order

1 Gulistan, 56 ; T. M., 195b ; Sair, III, 907. Haricharan, 449a ; Nur-ud-din (Najib's message to the Ruhelas and Shuja in Sept. 1757), p. 20a.

to enter into Ruhelkhand. So, 4000 Ruhela troops under Mulla Sardar were quickly detached to oppose this enemy force, and it seems that the other Ruhela chiefs also soon after advanced to the Mulla's support. Shuja-ud-daulah, himself having crossed the Ramganga on a bridge of boats[1] about the 1st November, hastened to Chandpur, 18 miles south-east of Bijnor, and thence to the village of Haldaur, 10 miles due north of Chandpur, and here he encamped, sending his advance-guard, 10,000 strong, under his two Gosain commanders Anup Giri and Umrao Giri with instructions to attack the enemy wherever they could be found. All of a sudden one day this force came upon the Marathas under Govind Ballal, who, after plundering and burning a few hundred villages of the modern Bijnor district and carrying depredation as far as Najib's bridge-head on the eastern bank of the Ganga, were lying in security, absolutely ignorant of Shuja-ud-daulah's movements. Fatigued though the Naga troops were by the whole night's march, they attacked the unaware Marathas with great vigour and determination, routing them in an instant, slaying two to three hundred of them and acquiring much booty and many prisoners. Overwhelmed with shame, the aged Maratha commander hastily collected his dispersed followers and took to flight towards Hardwar. But missing the ford in a hurry, half the number of his troops and horses were drowned in the Ganga. After enduring much misery and hardship, Govind Ballal with the wreck of his once fine army, rejoined Dattaji at Shukartal. Anup Giri, in exultant triumph, crossed the Ganga, with his 5,000 Nagas, by Najib's bridge and joined the latter at Shukartal, where about half a mile away from the Pathan entrenchment, he set up his own camp.[2]

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[1] Rajwade, Vol. I, 139. Sair, T. M., and Maadan say that he had to halt for 4 months, which seems an unduly long period of time. Nur-du-din, 25b; Gulistan, 56.

[2] Govind Ballal's letters, dated 4th and 7th November, Rajwade, Vol. I, Nos. 140 & 141 ; Nur-ud-din, 26b ; Haricharan, 499a & b ; Sair, III, 907 ; T. M., 196b and 197a ; Maadan, IV, 205b-206a.

Elated at the success of his vanguard, Shuja-ud-daulah pushed on to the bank of the river and halted there for some days. The first thing that he did was to send an envoy to the Maratha camp with a message that his sole object in coming over there was to bring about a cessation of hostilities and a peace of friendship between the combating forces. But Dattaji does not appear to have made an encouraging response. Meanwhile Hafiz Rahmat and other Ruhelas also arrived at the river bank, and there was a strong rumour in the Maratha camp that Shuja-ud-daulah was coming to attack Dattaji from the side of the Ganga, while Najib was ready to issue out and fall on him from the other direction, so that he would be caught and crushed between two fires. This was enough to frighten the common Maratha soldiers, who did not pause to ascertain the authenticity or otherwise of the rumour, and began to flee to places of safety. But Dattaji, a warrior to the backbone, was not the man to yield to any such weakness. He promptly brought back his dispirited fleeing troops in order to make a firm stand against the odds. But the news was utterly unfounded, for Shuja-ud-daulah was not ready to take sides in the struggle. He was only against the total destruction of Najib's power. Accordingly from his camp on the left bank of the Ganga, he exerted himself to bring about an amicable settlement of the dispute, offering his services to mediate between the parties. It was proposed that Najib-ud-daulah should pay an indemnity of twenty lakhs of rupees, whereupon Dattaji should raise the siege and retire. But the negotiations broke down, and the war continued.[1]

4. Dattaji raises the siege ; Shuja returns to Awadh

While the negotiations set on foot by Shuja-ud-daulah were still in progress, news came that Ahmad Shah Abdali had invaded the Punjab, and that its governor Sabaji, was in headlong fight. Considering it humiliating to raise the siege without extorting a war indemnity, Dattaji now made a last appeal to

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[1] Govind Ballal's letter, dated 24th November, 1759, Rajwade, Vol. I, Nos. 140, 146 ; T. Ahmad Shahi, p. 211b.

his allies to hasten to Shukartal and directed Govind Ballal to cross the Ganga and devastate Ruhelkhand so as to draw away Hafiz Rahmat and other Ruhelas for the defence of their homes and families and thereby dissolve their combination with Najib. But Govind Ballal could not embark on this strategy, as there was a strong presumption (about 28 November) that if he started on this mission, Shuja-ud-daulah would cross over to Shukartal and effect junction with Najib-ud-daulah. Then came the alarming news that the Shah had occupied the whole of the Punjab and Multan and annihilated the Maratha army posted at the latter place. The deluge from the north-west now appeared to engulf the imperial city, and Dattaji had no option but to abandon the siege on 8th December and advance northwards to check the Abdali's progress. Najib was thus saved from ruin and Shuja-ud-daulah, whose presence was badly needed in his own *subahs* in view of a local Rajput rising therein, struck camp about the 10th and hastened back to Awadh. Having crossed the Ramganga, he reached Bilgram on 27th and entered Lucknow[1] on 29th December, 1759.

5. The Prelude to the Panipat Episode

After a fortnight's marches and counter-marches, Dattaji met the Abdali reinforced by the Indo-Pathans on the field of Bararighat, 8 miles due north of Delhi and just west of the Yamuna, where he was shot dead on 9th January, 1760, while bravely leading his men on to a charge. The victor now placed the widowed city of Delhi under his nominee Yaqub Ali Khan and set his army in motion to drive Malhar Rao out of the Doab and to prevent Surajmal from backing up the Maratha cause in the north. This task having been successfully achieved, the invader with his Indo-Afghan allies advanced to Aligarh, captured the town and decided to canton there during the summer and the rainy season in compliance with Najib's request, and the latter undertook to provide the expenses of his army.

1 Govind Ballal's letter, Rajwade, Vol. I, 146; Ghulam Ali, Vol. I, 99; Sair, III, 907 ; T. M., 197a ; Maadan, IV, 206b.

The news of these reverses obliged the Peshwa to despatch a huge force to repair the loss in the north, and the execution of this difficult task was entrusted to Sadashiv Rao Bhau, the victor of Udgir, in preference to Raghunath Rao who had saddled the Government with a debt of eighty lakhs during his north-Indian campaign of 1757-58. But the general was not supplied with an adequate army, nor with sufficient funds. Despite these serious handicaps he began his journey with high hopes, and crossing the Chambal near Dholpur, halted on its northern bank from 8th June to 12th July.

A final struggle being now inevitable, each of the two parties began to beat up for allies. Ahmad Shah had already written letters to all the important rulers of Rajputana and other powerful Indian chiefs commanding their allegiance and requesting them to join him in a campaign of driving back the Marathas, the enslavers of northern India, to their homeland in the South. The Bhau's agents also waited upon all the Rajput Rajahs and non-Afghan Muslim chiefs with appeals to make a common cause with the Marathas in their coming contest against the foreign invader. But, although naturally more sympathetically disposed towards the Marathas, they gave evasive replies in view of the past Deccani record in the north and decided to adopt the safe policy of neutrality till one of the combating parties gained a decided advantage over the other and it became imprudent for them to remain aloof in political isolation for any length of time.

Shuja-ud-daulah's place among the Indian rulers of the time was unique. He ruled over a more extensive, fertile and populous dominion, comprised as it was of two of the most important *Subahs* of the country, than that possessed by any other prince, except the Nawab of Bengal, who was but a nominee and a helpless puppet in the hands of a foreign mercantile community. His army was among the very best in the country. It was composed of two powerful elements, namely, the *Qizilbashes* numbering six to seven thousands, most of whom had once belonged to Nadir Shah's forces and had subsequently taken service under Safdar Jang, and the *Naga Gosains*, ten

thousand strong, who were a race of most valiant and reckless fighters, and whose leaders were popularly believed to be expert in witchcraft and proof against bullets and cannon balls. His artillery was unquestionably the best in the land, if we omit to include the European guns recently introduced by the English and the French, from the point of the quality, variety and calibre and range of his guns and the efficiency of service. The financial resources of his dominion were great, and to them was added a well-filled treasury bequeathed to him by his father and grandfather. Shuja-ud-daulah's father had ruled the Empire as its Wazir for over five years, and this had supremely enhanced the prestige of the ruler of Awadh to whom habitual deference as to a superior was shown by most of the provincial chiefs including Najib-ud-daulah. The Nawab of Awadh therefore appeared to be a most valuable prospective ally, only if he could be persuaded to interest himself seriously in the approaching contest for supremacy. Hence each of the two antagonists strained every nerve to draw him over to his side.

Even before he entered into the heart of Malwa, the Bhau had issued clear orders to Govind Ballal to make every endeavour to persuade Shuja-ud-daulah to join him, and if he were reluctant to take an active part in the war on their side, to secure his neutrality at all costs. Realising that this object could be gained only by a clever combination of force and diplomacy, he ordered that as many boats as possible be collected and a bridge thrown over the Yamuna near Etawah so as to enable his army, upon their arrival, to quickly cross into the Doab, interpose a wedge between the Afghan possessions in the upper Doab and Shuja-ud-daulah and exert military pressure on the latter and thus prevent him from going over to the foreign invader, should he manifest any such intention. But Govind Ballal failed to carry out these orders owing to rains which set in very early that year, and as a consequence the Maratha diplomacy suffered from a serious handicap inasmuch as it had to function without being backed by force, and as we shall see, it ultimately proved ineffective. On the

other hand, the Pathans were highly favoured by the circumstances. While the Bhau was still south of the Chambal, and Govind Ballal could not move out owing to early rains, Najib-ud-daulah advanced to Etawah, captured Shikohabad and swept away almost all the Maratha possessions in the Doab as far as Bithur,[1] near Kanpur, bringing thereby the territory under the Shah's influence in close direct touch with Shuja-ud-daulah's frontier in that direction. As Ahmad Shah himself with all his force lay encamped at Aligarh, not far from the western frontier of Awadh, the Afghan negotiations with Shuja-ud-daulah had military sanction behind them and this was one of the reasons why they proved successful in the end.

6. The Maratha Negotiations with Shuja-ud-daulah

As early as 28th April, 1760, the Peshwa wrote to Govind Ballal expressing the hope that Shuja-ud-daulah would come over to his side willy-nilly, when a strong Maratha force reached Hindustan, and the very same day the Bhau sent him (G. Ballal) orders to beat up for allies among whom was, of course, to be included the Nawab of Awadh. It was impressed upon Shuja-ud-daulah that their interests were perfectly identical, that is, the saving of the country and the Mughal imperial house from destruction at the hands of a greedy foreign invader assisted by the Pathan traitors at home. Moreover, the Marathas had been hereditary well-wishers and allies of his family, there having existed great friendship between his father and the Sindhia and Holkar chiefs, and the relations between him and the Marathas, specially Malhar Rao Holkar, were as cordial as could be desired. Shuja-ud-daulah was further assured that after their victory over their common foe the administration of the Empire would be carried on by them jointly, (i. e., by Shuja and the Marathas). These preliminary negotiations had been carried on by Govind Ballal, but there was also a long direct correspondence between the Bhau and Shuja-ud-daulah, and that Maratha general on his arrival in Malwa sent a personal letter

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[1] Rajwade, Vol. I, 199.

soliciting an alliance with the Nawab. Although Shuja-ud-daulah was meditating to follow the policy of playing with both the parties and joining neither of them.[1] yet some time after he certainly became favourably inclined to the Maratha alliance. Wishing the Bhau victory, he held out hopes to the former that he would join him as soon as the Maratha army arrived in his vicinity. Encouraged by the response, the Maratha Commander-in-Chief despatched an envoy of the name of Shamji Rangnath to the Awadh Court to negotiate terms of the proposed alliance. But before this envoy reached Lucknow, the Nawab had definitely expressed his willingness to cast in his lot on the Maratha side on certain conditions, which in his own words were : "Give me the *Wizarat* and make Ali Gauhar Emperor. If you write that solemnly, then I shall come over to your side." And we may be sure that the Bhau gave the undertaking without hesitation. But, meantime Najib-ud-daulah and Jahan Khan with their troops pushed on to Bithur and the great military and diplomatic pressure from the Abdali shook Shuja-ud-daulah's faith in the Maratha alliance. Anxious to avoid the displeasure of either party, he reverted to his original conviction, the harmless path of neutrality, and abhorring the constant dinning by envoys from the combating rivals, he left his capital in the direction of Patna and gave out that he was going to join Shah Alam. But informed of the Pathan military progress to Bithur and nervous about the safety of his western frontier, he returned to Lucknow and marched towards Qanauj so as to be in touch with the proceedings of the Afghans in the near vicinity of his frontier.

All this disturbed the Bhau beyond measure, and in a final letter he stressed the hereditary friendship between Shuja-ud-daulah and the Marathas, appealed to him in the name of patriotism and loyalty to the Mughal throne to co-operate with him in expelling the foreign invader who, in conjunction

Rajwade, Vol. I, 173, 174, 176, 179, 187, 189, 191, 196 and 199 ; Kashiraj, 5 ; Imad, 178-79.

with the Indian Pathans, the long natural enemies to the Awadh ruling house, was bent upon supplanting the Timurides on the throne of Delhi, and once again promised solemnly to install prince Ali Gauhar as Emperor and elevate him (Shuja-ud-daulah) to *Wazirship*, if they were blessed with victory. He explained that he did not mean to request the Nawab to join him with his forces and take an active share in the approaching battle : all that he desired was that the Nawab should lend him his moral support, remain at his capital and not pay heed to the enemy's overtures. But neutrality was no longer possible in view of the presence of an envoy of Najib's diplomatic talents at the Court of Awadh. The disappointed Bhau made one more and final effort, and urged Govind Ballal to negotiate with the Nawab's mother (Sadrunnisa Begum), who possessed boundless influence over her son and was his supreme adviser in all matters, private or public ; but this too proved to be of no avail.[1]

7. The Abdali Negotiations with Shuja : Najib wins him over

The Shah was equally, if not more, anxious to secure the adhesion of Shuja-ud-daulah, for he realised that "should he be gained over by the Marathas, the worst consequences must arise from it." Accordingly, he offered him the same bait as the Bhau, namely, the office of the Minister of the Empire, and declared that his object was to give a fresh lease of life to the Mughal Empire under Shah Alam II. But inclined as Shuja-ud-daulah then was towards the Maratha alliance, he was not at all moved by the Abdali's professions. The invader therefore took the extraordinary step of sending Malka-i-Zamani, the venerable and universally liked widowed queen of the late Emperor Muhammad Shah, to Lucknow to put the weight of her influence and persuasion in the scale of negotiations on the Afghan side. But her mission, however much it might have shaken the Nawab's faith in the Maratha alliance, did not at all prove a success. Rightly

[1] Rajwade, Vol. I, 196 ; Imad, 79.

realising that the task of winning Shuja-ud-daulah was beyond the strentgh of an ordinary envoy, he decided upon deputing Najib-ud-daulah himself on this important diplomatic enterprise.

Armed with a treaty embodying the terms, the *Wizarat* to Shuja-ud-daulah and the Empire to Shah Alam, under the Shah's seal and that of his Wazir, Najib marched to Mahdighat on the Ganga, below Qanauj, where the Nawab of Awadh was then encamped. Shuja-ud-daulah accorded him a courteous reception ; and when they came to business, Najib delivered the Shah's message and presented to him the sealed treaty he had brought with him. The Nawab thereupon acquainted the guest with the terms offered to him by the Marathas, showed him the Bhau's letter in the original and expressed his own resolution to be neutral. The Marathas, he added, did not expect anything more, and even after their victory in the war they would remain friendly to him. With the shrewdness of a diplomat Najib characterised the Bhau's letter "a net of deception", and said that the Maratha policy, which required no elucidation even to a layman, was one of enslaving the whole of Hindustan. The Bhau, he added, bore a mortal hatred to all Muhammadans, and whenever he had power to show his enmity no Musalman whatever would escape from his clutches. Then, at this psychological moment, he came forward with his trump card, the last weapon of communal leaders to excite the religious frenzy of their co-religionist to the fever heat and exploit it for their own ends. It was not a war between a foreign invader and the chiefs of India, nor one between the Afghans and non-Afghans as the Bhau had fondly misrepresented it to be, urged the clever Pathan (who, like most of our modern Indo-Muslim leaders knew how to enlist the active sympathy of his brethren in faith by giving a communal tinge to an important secular problem and uttering the familiar cry of 'Islam in danger'), but "a war between Infidelity (Kufr) and Islam", a holy war in which it was the duty of every Musalman, and more so of a noble of Shuja-ud-daulah's exalted position, to participate. Obviously this stirring sermon

roused the religious feelings of the Nawab who replied, "By God, it is a thousand times better to fight against the Marathas and be slain, than endure the Abdali's taunt (for refusing to take part in the holy war)". Yet for certain reasons he would like to remain neutral. In the first place, he was an Indian, and secondly he belonged to the Shia faith, and hence it was not easily possible for him to pull on with the Shah and his officers who were foreigners and Sunnis. Moreover, he feared Ahmad Shah might even now be harbouring feelings of antipathy and revenge against him in view of his father's victory over the Shah on the field of Manupur only as far back as March, 1748.

At this stage of the negotiations Najib-ud-daulah must have felt very optimistic, for he had narrowed down Shuja-ud-daulah's objections to the minimum, and these also were of a purely personal nature. A good player of the game of diplomacy, he answered the Nawab's objections in these words : "What has Your Excellency to do with the officers of the Shah's army ? God is my witness that even if the Shah himself casts a stern eye on your Exellency I shall dig out both his eyes with these two fingers ; and if I do not do so I am not the son of my father. You should look upon about one and a half lakhs of Afghans in India as your servants." Then striking a personal note, he made an appeal to Shuja-ud-daulah on his own behalf. "I should have no cause of complaint," said he, "if Your Excellency had to deal with some other (envoy), and had not consented to go (and join the Shah). Now that I, depending upon your kindness and grace, have myself come, I hope you will not trample upon my word (of honour), but kindly do one of the two things : Either Your Excellency should come with me (to the Shah's army), or here is the dagger and here is my neck, you should cut it off with your own hands. If you order, I may hand over a written paper under my signature and seal absolving you of the (consequences of) murder." Thus in the most solemn manner Najib-ud-daulah pledged his word of honour for the Nawab's

safety, and gave him the fullest assurance of the Shah's intention to abide by the agreement.[1]

The die was cast, and Shuja-ud-daulah was won over. Still he took two or three days more to deliberate over the *pros* and *cons* of the momentous step he was going to take and to declare himself finally. His old and faithful officers, remembering the foreign policy of Safdar Jung, favoured an alliance with the Marathas, and advised the young Nawab to sit on the fence, as an alternative, and watch the issue of the contest, and then decide what to do. His mother too was not quite sanguine about the safety of her son in the Durrani's camp, who, she feared, had not forgotten the humiliating defeat he had suffered at the hands of her husband.[2] But all these misgivings were dispelled from Shuja-ud-daulah's mind by the solemn assurances of Najib, and he decided once for all to cast in his lot on the side of the Afghans, if and when similar assurance for his safety and investiture for *wazirship* were conveyed to him form the Shah himself. The Marathas hereafter made more than one serious effort to persuade him to remain neutral, but without success.

8. Significance of Najib's Success

It is hardly possible to over-estimate the importance of this diplomatic triumph of Najib-ud-daulah. The Nawab had rushed to the relief of Najib-ud-daulah besieged at Shukartal by the Marathas some months back, but that was due not so much to an excess of zeal for the latter's welfare as to his anxiety to maintain the balance of power in the north and the integrity of his own dominion, for the fall of Ruhelkhand was bound to react adversely on the independence of Awadh. The history of the Maratha relations with Awadh, on the other hand, was not one of constant antagonism. All through Safdar Jang's tenure as a minister at the Delhi Court (1743-1753) except for a brief period of six months at the end, the Sindhia and Holkar chiefs had been his allies

[1] Kashiraj, 10-11 ; Rajwade, I, 196, 202 ; Imad, 79-80 ; S. P. D., XXI-186.

[2] Kashiraj ; Rajwade, I, 215 ; Imad, 80.

and supporters. Since Shuja-ud-daulah's accession they had maintained friendly relations, and had exerted military pressure to save him from the hostile Wazir in 1757. No doubt the Maratha policy was one of self-aggrandisement and extortion from Shuja-ud-daulah of the three important seats of Hindu pilgrimage in his dominion, and even reducing him to the position of a mere tribute-paying vassal, if the Peshwa's dream of the conquest of Bengal and Bihar could ever be fulfilled. And yet, paradoxical as it may seem, Shuja-ud-daulah's attitude towards them was far from unfriendly. He was an aspirant for his father's post of the grand *Wazir* of the Empire and he rightly realised that he could not attain to that supreme dignity, and if he somehow succeeded in gaining this his long cherished ambition, he could not function as *Wazir*, without the moral and military support of the Marathas, the supreme controllers of the Court of Delhi at this juncture. In fact, he looked upon Najib and Imad-ul-mulk and not the Marathas, as his real rivals, for of these two the one possessed the intense ambition of becoming the supreme dictator at Delhi, while the other had enjoyed it for long and never relished the idea of being displaced by Shuja-ud-daulah or anybody else.

This cardinal fact of the situation has been missed by almost all the modern historians of the period, and it has been supposed that thoroughly disgusted and alarmed as he was, like all other north-Indian princes, owing to the Maratha policy of loot, enslavement and horror, Shuja-ud-daulah readily consented to form an alliance with the Afghans for driving out the hated Deccanis to the south. A close study of the situation and of the details of the diplomatic negotiations proves this view to be erroneous. It is worth noting in this connection that Shuja-ud-daulah's hopes from the Marathas were not without foundation. The Peshwa was seriously thinking of displacing the delinquent Imad-ud-mulk and elevating the Nawab of Awadh to the *wizarat*, and in his letter to the Sindhias (Dattaji and Jankoji), dated 21st March, 1759, he had directed the latter to effect this change,

if Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to pay them for this service.[1] Hence, if free choice were possible, and if Najib-ud-daulah had not thrown his tact, diplomacy and personal influence into the scale, and above all if he had not enacted the final scene (by placing his neck under the Nawab's dagger, etc.) that he did, Shuja-ud-daulah would have either joined the Marathas, or, and it is more probable, would have remained neutral. In either case he would have obliged the Marathas and got the *Wazir's* post and the Peshwa's backing in the discharge of his duties at the Imperial Court.

Shuja-ud-daulah's alliance with the Shah proved to be of benefit to the Afghans. His presence on the side of the foreign invader gave the latter's cause an enormous accession of moral prestige. But for it, the general public of the time would have regarded the war as one between the foreign Afghans and Indo-Afghans on one side and the Marathas on the other for supremacy over India that it really was, and not one between the Marathas and non-Marathas, which it was the anxiety of Najib and the Shah to make it appear to the contemporary Indian world. Although Shuja-ud-daulah's adhesion alone might not have led to important military results, his troops were by no means negligible. Their disciplined ranks remained in position to the last, and made a material contribution to the Afghan victory.

9. Shuja-ud-daulah in the Afghan Camp

With the laurels of this diplomatic success upon his brow, Najib-ud-daulah returned to the Shah, who despatched without delay the requisite assurance of safe conduct and the robe of honour as investiture of wazirship for Shuja-ud-daulah. Now, the Nawab sent his family to Lucknow and leaving his eldest son Mirza Amani (the future Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah) in charge of the provinces with Rajah Beni Bahadur as his guardian and adviser, himself with 4,000 chosen cavalry,[2] a good park of

1 *Aitihasik Patren Yadi wagaire Lekh*, L. Nos. 167 and 171.
2 Kashiraj, 12 ; Sair, III. 910-11 ; T. M., 199 ; Imad, 80. The last named work says that Shuja started with 30,000 horse and 10,000 foot--undoubtedly exaggerated figures.

artillery and a large crowd of servants and camp-followers, set out for the Afghan camp in the first week of July (last Ashra of Zi-Qaad). On 18th July, 1760, he reached near the Shah's encampment at Anupshahar, and was welcomed a few miles in advance by the Durrani Wazir Shah Wali Khan and conducted to the royal tents. First of all Prince Timur embraced him with due ceremony, and then the Shah himself received him with the greatest kindness and honour and conferred upon him the title of his son (Farzand Khan).

It is recorded in an exactly contemporary Marathi letter that the very next day after the Awadh Nawab's arrival at Anupshahar, Ahmad Shah proposed to invest him formally with the robe of Wazir. But Shuja-ud-daulah replied, "Who is the Emperor ? Whose Wazir am I to be ? You sit on the imperial throne and I shall serve you as Wazir. Why are you making me ridiculous by giving me the robe of an office, without function ?"[1] The Shah was silenced, and there was no further talk about the wizarat.

There is enough evidence on record to show that Shuja-ud-daulah was not quite at ease in the Afghan camp, and the Durrani rank and file were unfavourably disposed towards him and his Shia troops. Within a month of Shuja-ud-daulah's arrival at Anupshahar occurred the celebrated Muslim festival commonly known as *Muharram*, which commemorates the battle of Karbala and the death of the Prophet's grandson Husain, and is particularly observed by the Shias. On one of those days, between 12th and 22nd of August, 1760, the Nawab with his followers, all clad in black mourning dress, bareheaded and barefooted, were marching in a procession with *Alams* in their hands, reciting elegies celebrating the incidents of Husain's death in fairly audible notes and beating their heads and breasts in grief. In this condition they passed by the Afghan camp. Being staunch Sunnis, the Durranis took offence at it, and wanted to attack the processionists. But the Shah, realising that it would mean the break-up of the league

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[1] Govind Ballal's letter to Janardan Pant, dated at Tirwa, 29th August, 1760, Rajwade, Vol. I. 236.

he had organised, ordered the Durranis to refrain from the attack. The common Durrani troops were stubborn and disobedient, and in spite of the Shah's strict discipline, they committed certain irregularities in Shuja-ud-daulah's camp, and they refrained from giving trouble only after 200 of them had been seized, and their noses had been bored and arrows and strings passed through the holes at the Shah's orders. The Shah himself having chanced to see the stark naked Gosain troops of the Awadh army one day, became displeased and directed Shuja-ud-daulah to banish all such troops from his camp immediately. Needless to add that the order had to be complied with immediately.[1] These and similar other incidents must have been annoying to Shuja-ud-daulah, and he must have felt a little uncomfortable during his stay in the Afghan camp.

10. Shuja-ud-daulah's efforts for Peace

The Bhau felt no little disturbed by the news of Shuja-ud-daulah's having effected a junction with the Afghans, and he wrote to Bhawani Shanker, the Maratha Vakil at the Nawab's court to wait on him with his letter which complained bitterly of Shuja-ud-daulah's having allied himself with the invader and appealed to him to abandon this unnatural alliance, and come to join the Maratha army or return to his own dominion. Taking advantage of this correspondence, Shuja-ud-daulah, who was but a half-hearted ally of the Shah and secretly anxious to avert the conflict, undertook to endeavour to bring about an amicable settlement, and replied to the Bhau stressing the need of peace, as all the important Muslim chiefs having given their adhesion to the Shah, the war had assumed a religious character and all the political and economic issues had been side-tracked and even forgotten (*tamam mulk wa mal az miyan barkashta*). He assured the Bhau of his friendship, and added that his presence in the Afghan camp was of some advantage to the Maratha cause inasmuch as the door to peace was still kept open and that he would try his

[1] Imad, 83, 84 ; Kashiraj, 12.

best to smooth the way to it.[1] Rajah Devi Dutt and Rao Kashiraj, a Maratha Brahman in the service of the Nawab and the author of the well-known account of the Panipat campaign, were directed to go to the Maratha camp and discuss the preliminaries and negotiate peace[2] (about the end of July, 1760). The peace talks began about the end of July and continued for about two months.

The envoys of both the sides busied themselves in exploring avenues for an accommodation. But there were higglings and protracted negotiations on the vexed question of territorial readjustment between the Abdali and the Marathas. and the latter and Najib and other Indo-Pathan chiefs. We are informed by no less an authority than Kashiraj himself that after much discussion the Bhau eventually agreed to leave the country as far as Sarhind, that is, the whole of the Punjab, to the Shah.[3] But there does not appear any agreement to have been reached regarding the differences between the Marathas and the Indian Pathans, who were extremely apprehensive of their future designs. Ahmad Shah personally had no objection to the above tentative settlement, and seems to have expressed his intention to go back to his country. But the terms were obviously obnoxious to Imad-ul-mulk and his newly found patron Surajmal who was a warm supporter of the former's candidature for the *wizarat*, and the two left the Maratha camp and marched away angrily to Ballabgarh *en route* to Bharatpur. Najib-ud-daulah also was averse to a settlement and "threw every obstacle that he could in the way of peace."[4] The Maratha capture of Delhi on 2nd August and the reports of economic distress in the Afghan camp had raised the spirits and the pride of the Bhau, who was no

Kashiraj, 13 ; Imad, 184-85.

Bhau's letter, 28th July, 1760, Rajwade, Vol. I 222 ; Kashiraj, 15 ; Imad, 184.

Kashiraj, 15-16 ; Imad, 185, Later historians like the authors of Sair, T. M., Maadan, etc. say that Shuja did not entertain the proposals of peace and sent a curt reply to the Bhau's letter, for he deserved no better answer.

Delhi Chronicle, 1777-78 ; Kashiraj, 14-15.

longer very anxious for patching it up with the enemy. Hence, although the negotiations were uselessly spun out for long, they yielded no result whatever.

11. The Shah threatens to extort money from Shuja-ud-daulah

During their stay in the Doab (first at Aligarh and then at Anupshahar) the Abdali and his allies suffered from acute distress for want of money and food supply. Najib's contribution of ten lakhs of rupees did not suffice to meet even a month's expenditure of the army, while other Ruhela chiefs, pleading poverty, evaded compliance with the Abdali's demands. The Shah then turned to Shuja-ud-daulah, and one day about the end of the first week of August, 1760, he thus made a demand for contribution : "You are a leading noble, and two krores worth of land is under you. I am hard-pressed by the increasing arrears of my soldiers' pay. Make some arrangement for it." Shuja-ud-daulah at once perceived that although the Abdali's demand had the appearance of a request, it was in effect nothing short of a threat of extortion, and so he became sad and went to the Durrani Wazir Shah Wali Khan and reporting to him the Shah's conversation, said, "I came here relying upon your faith. What does this (demand) mean now?" The Wazir replied, "You have come here at the word of this wicked man (Najib). Who could have gone against your crossing the Ganga ? I did not send you any pledge of safety. As you have come, so do you satisfy the Shah." Thus censured and disappointed, Shuja-ud-daulah returned to his camp. The incident led to a rupture between him and Najib-ud-daulah, and the Nawab blamed the latter for having lured him into the grip of his natural enemy. Shuja-ud-daulah felt mortified and repented of his choice of an alliance with the Afghans. He thus expressed his injured feelings in his inner council: "Najib-ud-daulah has entangled me....I have come here at the word of this pimp, and have (therefore) been disgraced."[1]

Govind Ballal's letter to Janardan Pant, Rajwade, I, 246.

Najib-ud-daulah seems to have realised his personal responsibility for Shuja-ud-daulah's safety and implored the Shah not to press his demand on the latter. At any rate, it is certain that no money contribution was forcibly extorted from him.

12. Shuja-ud-daulah's final effort for Peace

The wet season was now about to complete its course and dry winter, during which campaigning becomes easy, was quite at hand. Having recognised Shah Alam as Emperor and nominated Shuja-ud-daulah as Wazir so as to tempt the latter to abandon the Shah's cause, the Bhau, leaving Delhi, captured Kunjpura, and then proceeded to Panipat, where the Abdali too hastened in anticipation of a final encounter. Here the Maratha army became really besieged without hope of provisions and relief from any quarter. At last extreme scarcity and starvation caused by the Shah's relentless policy of completely cutting off all communications and supplies of food and fodder, damped the pride and spirits of the Bhau, no less than those of his officers and troops, and compelled him to sue for terms. The only chief of note in the Shah's camp, who could still have some sympathy with the Marathas, was Shuja-ud-daulah, and to him the Bhau sent a sheet of blank paper bearing the impression of his palm in saffron dye, and a Deccan turban of costly white stuff together with a diamond-studded aigrette (*sarpech*), intended for exchanging with that of the Nawab in token of brotherhood, and requested him to bring about peace, promising on solemn oath to abide by its terms. Shuja-ud-daulah welcomed the overtures, sent the Bhau suitable presents in return and acquainted the Durrani Wazir with the details of the proposal. A good-natured man, Shah Wali Khan lent a willing ear to Shuja-ud-daulah's message and spoke to the Shah of the advisability of taking a suitable ransom from the Marathas and returning to Kabul. The Afghan monarch, who professed to have undertaken the campaign with the sole object of rescuing the Indo-Pathans and serving the cause of Islam, referred the negotiations to Najib and his other clansmen. Accordingly the Durrani Wazir summoned

the Ruhela chiefs and held consultations with them. All preferred peace to war except Najib who expressed himself strongly against the idea of entertaining such a proposal at a time when the whole of the Deccani force was completely at their mercy, and he succeeded in converting the Shah to his views through a fanatical *qazi*, named Idris.[1]

Although all was over with the proposal, Shuja continued his endeavour, and as everything rested on Najib, he sent Kashiraj to persuade him to give up the policy of obstruction and agree to peace. After having attentively listened to the message, Najib replied, "His Excellency (Shuja) is my prince, and I consider myself to be his servant. But owing to youth he does not realise the consequences of his proposal, and shows sympathy with that race (Marathas). This is not seeing the reality of the situation......Peace or treaty is not a chain that might prevent the breaking of faith. All this (Maratha) humility and submission is not the outcome of sincerity, but is due to cunning and deceit. As soon as the Shah turns back his reins towards *Wilayat* (Afghanistan) this storm will burst upon my head and will sweep away the very foundation of Islam. In short, this (Maratha) is one thorn in the garden of Hindustan, and if it is not uprooted this time, it will pierce the skirt of my safety again...His Excellency should wait a little. I will myself wait upon him and explain everything in detail. Then I shall abide by whatever shall be his decision." Kashiraj returned disappointed and reported the conversation to Shuja-ud-daulah.

Immediately after Kashiraj had taken leave, Najib-ud-daulah repaired to the Shah's tents and related to him the story of the peace move, the conference with the Wazir and finally what had passed between him and Kashiraj. While he deprecated peace and its consequences, he expressed his readiness to submit to the Shah's decision, knowing full well the change wrought in the invader's mind by the fanatical appeal of *qazi* Idris. The Afghan monarch approved of Najib's attitude

1 Nur-ud-din, 44a-45b ; Kashiraj, 27-28 ; Imad, 192.

towards the questions and said, "Shuja-ud-daulah is young and inexperienced and the Marathas are a crafty race on whose pretended penitence no reliance should be placed." He then assured the Ruhela chief that he would not take a final step without his advice.[1]

Next day Najib-ud-daulah paid a visit to Shuja-ud-daulah, and from evening to midnight they held consultations, but without coming to any decision. Meanwhile life in the Maratha camp had become utterly unbearable, the soldiers and their captains having got not a morsel of food for the last two days. For more than two months they had suffered from semi-starvation and now life seemed to have no zest. So, during the night of 13th January, 1761, they resolved to fight a pitched battle next morning (14th). Then the Bhau, anxious to save his army from an inevitable destruction, sent the following final note to Kashiraj to be delivered to Shuja-ud-daulah without delay. "The flood," wrote the Bhau with his own hand, "has risen above my head. If anything can be done, do it, otherwise inform me immediately, for hereafter there will be no time for writing or speaking." The note was delievered to Shuja-ud-daulah before dawn ; but, obviously there was now no time for negotiations. The Marathas were seen moving out of their lines in battle array, and Shuja-ud-daulah sent timely information to the Shah.[2] The Afghans took but little time to be in the field.

13. Shuja-ud-daulah on the Field of Panipat, 14th January, 1761

The two armies in their fullest strength, having now come out in the open, grappled in a death-struggle, and a hard-contested battle raged furiously from sunrise to about 3 P. M. on 14th January, 1761, when the Maratha force, after the loss of its valiant leader, was utterly annihilated, leaving the Shah victorious.[3] Shuja-ud-daulah was posted immediately to the

[1] Imad, 193 ; Kashiraj, 28-29.
[2] Kashiraj, 29-30 ; Imad, 190-94.
[3] For the battle see Sir Jadunath Sarkar's *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. II, Chapter XXI.

left of the Shah's centre, and his small but well-equipped force numbered 2,000 horse, 1,000 musketeers, twenty pieces of cannon and some swivel guns. The cannons were securely tied together with strong iron chains. When the vigorous Maratha attacks launched simultaneously on the right wing and centre of the Afghan line created havoc in the enemy ranks and raised great clouds of dust and smoke, the Durrani centre under Shah Wali Khan got completely hidden from Shuja-ud-daulah's view. Sometime after the sound of men and horses suddenly diminished, and the Nawab, apprehending a disaster to that division, sent Kashiraj to ascertain the truth. The latter found Shah Wali Khan sitting on the ground, beating his forehead in agony and trying to rally his defeated and scattered followers. As his distressed eye fell upon Kashiraj, he requested him to convey his appeal to Shuja-ud-daulah to come immediately to his rescue, or he was done for. But the Nawab rightly saw the danger of leaving his post in response to the Wazir's call, for the enemy, being so near, must in that event have taken advantage of the gap thus left and pushed on to the Afghan rear. So he remained firm in his position keeping his men in hand, and ready to meet attack. Once or twice the Marathas did advance very near to his division, as if intending to charge. But either the firmness of the Nawab's troops or his hardly disguised sympathy with the Marathas made the latter refrain from attack.[1] About a quarter to three in the afternoon, the Maratha army suffered a complete set-back, Viswas Rao lay dead on the field, and its commander-in-chief, brave and defiant of odds to the end, met a soldier's death. And then the remnant of the Deccan force was completely enveloped. The Afghans, the Ruhelas and the Awadh troops fell upon these now helpless Marathas, and a fearful scene of carnage and plunder was enacted. There was seen nothing but confusion, the enemy troops fleeing in all directions and being hotly pursued by the victors for miles together.

Kashiraj, 37 ; Imad, 196.

14. Shuja-ud-daulah's Humanitarian Work after the Maratha Defeat

Towards the end of the day, the wreck of the grand Maratha army, which beggars description, was frightfully complete. Besides countless corpses found strewn on the paths in the plains and the nooks and corners of the jungles around Panipat, about 28,000 troops and their spirited leaders, Viswas Rao and the Bhau, lay dead on the field of battle.[1] About thirty-five thousand were taken prisoners and slaughtered in cold blood by the heartless Durranis. About eight thousand miserable Maratha refugees and 400 of their officers took shelter in Shujah-ud-daulah's camp and the latter besides generously affording them all protection he could, despatched them under a strong escort to Surajmal's dominion, financing their journey from his own pocket and giving Rs. 2 to each of about 2,000 sufferers.[2]

Shuja-ud-daulah was anxious to secure the dead bodies of Viswas Rao, the Bhau and other Maratha chiefs of note from dishonour and disfigurement at the Durrani hands and to hand them over to Kashiraj for cremation according to Hindu rites. On the morrow of the battle he paid Rs. 2,000 to some troopers belonging to the regiment of Barkhurdar Khan for delivering to him Viswas Rao's dead body. The Shah having ordered Shuja-ud-daulah to send the body for him to look at, the latter had to comply. The Durranis assembled in large numbers and tumultuously demanded that the body being that of the King of the Hindus should be dried and taken to Kabul as a memento of their victory. Their united demand could not be easily evaded, and Shuja-ud-daulah had to hasten to the spot and appeal to the Abdali to allow the corpse to be released for obsequies. He advised the Shah to follow the ancient custom of India according to which the dead bodies of the defeated party were given up to their survivors, a departure wherefrom in this case would not

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[1] Kashiraj, 40.
[2] Kashiraj, 40-51 ; Imad, 82.

only redound to the dishonour of the victor but would also be productive of ill-consequences for his allies, the permanent Muslim residents of India who had to deal with the Hindus all through their lives. Najib and other Ruhelas joined in the appeal, and after a few days' mild agitation the body was made over to Shuja-ud-daulah.

The Bhau's corpse eluded two days' search and could only be discovered on the third day after the battle. Accompanied by some Maratha refugees, a few hundred water-carriers and menial servants, Shuja-ud-daulah visited the field on the 15th, but had to return unsuccessful. Next morning he repeated his visit and again went through the various stages of the search, when a Durrani trooper pointed out a spot, half a mile away, where he had seen the body which appeared to be that of a chief. Here a headless body was picked up from the midst of a heap of corpses, and when washed clean it was recognised as that of the Bhau. After the Shah's formal permission had been obtained, the dead bodies of Viswas Rao and the Bhau along with those of some other Maratha officers were entrusted by Shuja-ud-dualah to Anup Giri Gosain and Kashiraj for the last rites according to Hindu religion. The Bhau's head was recovered from a Durrani trooper by the exertions of the Nawab, and was put to the fire a day later.[1]

Shuja-ud-daulah wanted to effect the release and save the life of Jankoji Sindhia, who had been wounded and taken prisoner, by paying a ransom for him. But owing to Najib's hostility the Sindhia was secretly done away with by his captor, Barkhurdar Khan.[2] Another enemy of note whom Shuja was anxious to save from destruction was Ibrahim Khan Gardi, the celebrated superintendent of the Bhau's *topkhana*. He had been grievously wounded and fallen into the hands of the Nawab's troops by whom he was given refuge and placed under the treatment of competent surgeons. Shuja-ud-daulah wished to send him to Lucknow as soon as he was fit to bear

1 S. P. D., Vol. II. 148 ; Kashiraj, 46-50 ; Imad, 201-202 ; Nur-ud-din, 51b-52a ; Rajwade, VI, 407, 408 & 516.

2 Kashiraj, 43-45.

the strain of the long and tedious journey, undoubtedly with the object of employing him in his army and placing his artillery under his charge. But unfortunately the news of the Gardi's having taken shelter with Shuja-ud-daulah leaked through somehow, and a large number of the Durranis surrounded the Nawab's tents and tumultuously demanded the immediate surrender of this Muslim ally of the hated Marathas. There was a great noise and commotion, and Shuja-ud-daulah was about to come to blows with the Afghan hooligans, when Shah Wali Khan intervened. Ibrahim Khan Gardi was taken to the Shah, and placed under the custody of the Durrani Wazir and there he was poisoned by the Abdali's orders.[1]

15. The Maratha Raids in Awadh

About the very time when Shuja-ud-daulah was making his last honest endeavour to avert the fatal conflict, two minor Maratha officers were raiding his territory at two different places north of the well-known region of the Gangetic Doab. It will be recalled that the Bhau had all along been anxious to bring about the dissolution of the alliance between the Afghans and Shuja-ud-daulah, and in his opinion the most effective way of achieving this object was by invading the latter's dominion, which was sure to force him to return to Awadh and sever his connection with the Abdali. In this work he wanted to seek the aid and co-operation of some of the powerful disaffected Awadh barons whom he was desirous of instigating to a general rising against the Nawab's administration. As early as the first week of July, 1760, when the news of Shuja-ud-daulah's having definitely given his adhesion to the invader's cause had reached him, the Bhau had issued orders in the name of Govind Ballal to incite the zamindars of Awadh and Balwant Singh of Banaras, who should be promised adequate rewards for their services. The orders were repeated in the Bhau's letter of 10th July in these words : "Make reprisals in Shuja-ud-daulah's territory, win the zamindars over and incite them, specially Balwant Singh. Banish Shuja-ud-daulah's rule from the Doab up to

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[1] Kashiraj, 41 ; Imad, 200-201.

Allahabad." On 27th July he again urged Govind Ballal to foment rebellions in Awadh and send 10,000 of his own troops to back up the refractory and rebellious landlords therein. He thus concluded his letter, "But don't delay in rousing the zamindars to rebel."[1] Gopal Ganesh Barve, another Maratha officer of some importance, was given similar instructions to embark upon the same expedition, but in a different part of Shuja-ud-daulah's *Subahs*. But in spite of these positively urgent orders neither Govind Ballal nor Gopal Ganesh could bestir themselves in time nor send a force to Awadh, evidently because of excessive rains and flood in the rivers, and we find the Bhau complaining against the two officers as late as the last week of October for their failure to discharge the duties assigned to them.[2] A little later, however, Govind Ballal having been deputed on a more important mission, namely, that of ravaging Najib's territory and cutting off the enemy's communication with and food supplies from Ruhelkhand, the work of raiding Awadh devolved upon Gopal Ganesh Barve, (*Faujdar* of Kora Jahanabad) and Krishnanand Pant, *Faujdar* of Kara. In his letter dated 6th December, 1760, the Maratha commander-in-chief accused Barve of lethargy and negligence, and chid him for his failure to take advantage of a rebellion of some of the Awadh chiefs on 28th November, probably due to Maratha instigation, reminded him of the difference between mere talk and concrete achievement, and again urged him to enlist the support of Balwant Singh, of Hindupati of Partabgarh and other notables of that region by promising them jagirs, cession of important territory and the like, and proceed on the expedition immediately.[3]

At last the two *faujdars*, after having intrigued with some of the important disaffected Awadh chiefs, notably Rajah Balbhadra Singh of Tiloi and Hindupati (brother of the

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1 Bhau's letter to Govind Ballal, Rajwade, Vol. I, 215, 216, 220.

2 Bhau's letter to Govind Ballal, dated 25th Oct., 1760, Rajwade, Vol. I, 260.

3 S. P. D., Vol. II, 134.

murdered Prithipati) of Partabgarh, and instigated them to break into open rebellion, marched out of their respective districts in the direction of the Ganga. Gopal Rao crossed the river at Dalmau (17 miles south-west of Rai Bareli) into the heart of the modern Rai Bareli district, while Krishnanand went across it at Manikpur, six miles north of Kara, and entered Partabgarh district. At both these places the neighbouring Rajput landlords with their troops were ready to receive them and now they joined the Marathas in their destructive activities. The first task that engaged Barve and his new allies was the plunder and sack of Dalmau, which witnessed a horrible massacre of its inhabitants and looting of their property. But Krishnanand being a kind-hearted man, Manikpur was spared such a horror. "Nevertheless, the place was gutted and the property of many fugitives, who were attempting to escape, was plundered from the boats as they were going down the river."[2] There being no opposition from any quarter, the raiders easily penetrated into the heart of the Rai Bareli, Partabgarh and Sultanpar districts, carrying fire and sword through the countryside on their way and driving away the Nawab's officers from the police and revenue stations in the region. Accompanied by Hindupati and some other chiefs of the vicinity, Krishnanand marched in a south-easterly direction, raiding the country as he went, till he reached the town of Nawabganj, 10 miles north-west of Allahabad. In spite of the Pant's kindness, the town was mercilessly plundered, devastated and set on fire. Carrying their depredation still further, they advanced to Phulpur (in the modern Sultanpur district, and situated 40 miles north-west of Mirzapur), which passed through the same horrible experience. The fate of the towns and villages in the Rai Bareli district that lay in the path of Gopal Rao Barve can be easily imagined.

Meanwhile, the reports of the invasion having reached Faizabad, the Nawab's troops under Rajah Beni Bahadur himself came up and fell upon the raiders. Balbhadra Singh,

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[2] Awadh Gazetteer, Vol. II, 479.

Hindupati and other Rajahs were defeated and dispersed. Gopal Rao's troops were scattered and they fled in headlong rout in all directions. He himself, confounded and accompanied by 5 to 7 of his troopers, found a path open and after many miles' fast riding at break-neck pace crossed the Ganga back at a spot just north of Vindhyachal, which is hallowed by the temple of *Vindhya-basini* goddess (3 miles west of Mirzapur) and retreated to Kora Jahanabad.[1] Krishnanand Pant seems to have begun his retreat in time, and as he happened to have been far away from the Awadh troops, he succeeded in saving his men and in reaching his district safely. These raids occurred in the middle of January, 1761, and most probably a few days later than the battle of Panipat.[2] Beni Bahadur, Rai Surat Singh, Najaf Khan and Ismail Beg pursued the raiders for miles together and cleared them out of the two *Subahs* without much difficulty. Rajah Balbhadra Singh was soon punished for his defection and alliance with the Marathas by being driven into exile across the Ghaghra and temporarily dispossessed of his flourishing estate of Tiloi. Hindupati met with the same fate. Not long after, however, the two Rajahs recovered possession of their patrimony, Balbhadra Singh, because of his connections with Tiloi being too intimate to keep him away from it for any length of time, and Hindupati, because in the greed for his estate he threw himself on Shuja-ud-daulah's mercy and embraced Islam.[3]

16. Shuja-ud-daulah Returns to Awadh

After the grand victory, the Shah with his allies including Shuja-ud-daulah marched to Delhi, which the latter reached on 24th January, while the Abdali entered[4] the city on the

1 Balkrishna Dixit's letter, dated Banaras, 25th January, 1761, Rajwade, Vol. III, 511.

2 The news of the failure of Barve and his fight reached Banaras on 25th January, 1761, while that of the Maratha defeat at Panipat on 28th January. See Rajwade, Vol. III, Nos. 511 & 512.

3 Awadh Gazetteer, Vol. II, p. 479 ; Hadia, p. 674.

4 Delhi Chronicle, p. 183.

29th. The Afghan monarch confirmed the Bhau's arrangement of settling the Empire on Shah Alam and nominating the latter's son and heir to act as the head of the Government during the new Emperor's absence. Although he talked of conferring the wazirship on Shuja-ud-daulah, on which express condition the Nawab had chosen the Afghan side in the late contest, he did not redeem his promise, perhaps because he was not quite well impressed by Shuja-ud-daulah, who was of Persian lineage and of Shia faith and had undisguised sympathy for the Marathas and antipathy towards the Ruhelas. During the invader's stay at Delhi, his troops broke out into a mutiny and got temporarily out of control. In this state of excitement they picked a quarrel with Shuja-ud-daulah's men. A Hindustani woman, having fallen into the hands of an ordinary Durrani officer, who wanted to take her away to Afghanistan, escaped to Shuja-ud-daulah's camp, and was given shelter by Abdul Ali Khan, the superintendent of the Nawab's advance tents (Mir Manzil) and secretly sent away to Awadh. The said Durrani, enlisting the support of Jahan Khan and many Afghan troops, demanded the woman back. He caught hold of Abdul Ali Khan and threatened to attack him, and when Shuja-ud-daulah intervened with the intention of extricating them, he used him also badly. A large number of Afghan troops came up to the scene, and the quarrel assumed the aspect of a Shia-Sunni struggle. When the news reached the good-natured Durrani Wazir (Shah Wali Khan), he with some other notable Afghan officers immediately hastened to the spot, brought the quarrel to an end and endeavoured to pacify the ruler of Awadh. Shuja-ud-daulah had felt publicly insultad and hurt, and he complained loudly of this rough treatment after all the valuable assistance he had rendered to the Shah. Ahmad Shah punished the Durrani trooper concerned and summoned Shuja-ud-daulah to his presence to appease his wrath by sweet words. Instead of appearing in person, the latter, through Najib-ud-daulah, begged leave to depart for Awadh, adding that the work for which he had come, had been

accomplished. Ahmad Shah acceded to the request, and gave Shuja-ud-daulah the *congee* by sending him a robe of honour and some presents in addition. Accordingly, the Nawab left Delhi on 7th March, 1761, crossed the Yamuna and traversed a distance of thirty miles that night, for he feared that the Afghan monarch might have taken offence at his sudden departure, and the Durrani troops might fall on his retreating rear. But luckily nothing of the kind actually happened, and by forced marches, Shuja-ud-daulah arrived at Mahdighat on the Ganga below Qanauj on the 5th day (11th March). Here he crossed the river the next morning (12th), and entered his dominions.[1]

[1] Imad, 83-84, 204; Kashiraj, 51-52; Delhi Chronicle, p. 184.

chapter Six

The first Contact with the English ; Operations in Bundelkhand

1. The English suspect Shuja-ud-daulah's Movements : 1757-59

Even before they became a power in Bengal, the English had been suspicious of Shuja-ud-daulah's ambitious designs, and had been keeping a vigilant eye on his movements in the eastern parts of the Awadh dominion. As early as May, 1756, when the plans for Siraj-ud-daulah's overthrow were being carefully laid and the British supremacy in Bengal was still in the making, Clive and the Council were disturbed by a piece of information furnished by Mr. Watts, Resident at Murshidabad, in a letter dated 23rd May, 1757, that "The nabob (Siraj-ud-daulah) wrote sometime ago to Shuja-ud-daulah, Nawab of Awadh, to request his assistance against us (the English). Accordingly, a considerable person is arrived from him to settle the terms of agreement, when his (Shuja's) army which is at Elibass (Allahabad) under the command of Muhammad Quli Khan will march down. This news is to be depended on."[1] A month later Siraj-ud-daulah was defeated at Plassey, and the English became the real power behind the new Nawab's throne and the latter from the very beginning of his reign sank into the position of a weak demoralised puppet in the hands of Clive and his colleagues. Apart from the moral considerations that they must uphold the authority of one whom they had raised to the *gaddi* and who had granted them numerous political and commercial privileges besides handsomely

[1] Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 1757. No. 2, p. 114.

rewarding them for their share in the late revolution, the English felt bound from motives of both policy and expendiency to protect Mir Jafar and his dominion, for the safety and permanence of the English position depended upon the immunity of Bengal from foreign attack, and hence Clive's anxiety to keep a strict watch over all elements of disturbance from outside in general and over Shuja-ud-daulah in particular, as his dominion bordered on Bengal and he was believed to be ambitious of extending it as far eastward as he could. One of the many news-writers in the Company's service reported soon after the battle of Plassey that "The Nawab of Awadh on hearing the death of Siraj-ud-daulah was much concerned and grieved...", and there was a strong rumour that M. Law had entered his service and that he "will fill him (Shuja) with a notion of finding great riches in these parts and will use all his endeavours to bring him." Murshidabad was actually filled with alarming reports that Shuja-ud-daulah with M. Law and Rajah Ram Narayan was coming to invade Bengal and depose Mir Jafar. The widow of Alivardi Khan is said to have appealed to the Nawab of Awadh to help Ram Narayan, deputy-governor of Bihar, to make a firm stand against the new ruler of Bengal, and there is no doubt that the Rajah also was in correspondence with Shuja-ud-daulah.[1] But the situation, however intriguing, was not in the least alarming. Jean Law, who was coming at the head of 200 French soldiers and some officers to the assistance of Siraj-ud-daulah, had quickly retraced his steps back from Rajmahal on hearing of his defeat and capture, and Clive had already despatched Eyre Coote to pursue and chase him out of Bihar. By forced marches Law reached the Karamnasa and crossed over to Shuja-ud-daulah's dominions, and Eyre Coote returned from Chapra. Clive now (1st August) directed Eyre Coote to "write to Suja-Dowlat (Shuja-ud-daulah) that respect for him had prevented your (Coote's) pursuing your enemies (Law and his

[1] Khwajah Ashraf's letter in Bengal Public Progs., August, 1757, pp. 247-48 ; Orme, Vol. II, pp. 270-72, 194.

troops) into his country and assure him in general terms of the friendship of the English, desiring he will give the French up." On his return to Patna, Eyre Coote was informed by Muhammad Ami, the brother, and Mir Qasim, the brother-in-law of Mir Jafar (who were anxious to remove Ram Narayan from office) that Ram Narayan was preparing to assert his independence with Shuja-ud-daulah's help. But, though the Rajah was undoubtedly exchanging letters with the Nawab of Awadh, he had, as the subsequent events proved, no thought of independence. The fears from Shuja-ud-daulah also were equally groundless. He had just managed to save himself from a devastating deluge from Kabul, Delhi and Farrukhabad which had threatened to submerge him and his dominion. After having concluded a peace with Imad-ul-mulk and his allies Ahmad Khan Bangash and Jangbaz Khan, the erstwhile invaders of his territory, Shuja-ud-daulah had returned to Lucknow at the end of June or the beginning of July, 1757, and sunk in debauchery and sloth.[1] There is not a vestige of evidence in the pages of Persian authorities or in the letters of the Maratha wakil at his court, (a keen observer of men and affairs on which he sent regular reports to the Peshwa) to show that Shuja-ud-daulah at this time entertained any idea of interfering with the happenings in Bengal.

Throughout the next year (1758) also the English policy continued to be one of the suspicious watchfulness of Shuja-ud-daulah's movements. In February, 1758, came the news that having allied with Law and the Marathas, he was coming to invade Bihar and Bengal. But this piece of information, like many others of its kind, was altogether without any foundation. A few months later the English suspicion was revived when Mr. Scrafton reported from Morandbarry on 28th June, 1758, that Shuja-ud-daulah "was arrived at Gujeepore (Ghazipur), and proposing to cross the Carrumnussa (Karam-

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1 Clive's letter to Eyre Coote, dated Muxadabad, 1st August, 1757, quoted in Forrest's *Clive*, Vol. II, p. 31 ; Orme, Vol. II, p. 194.

nasa), having been invited by the Rajhas (of Bihar)." The Select Committee at Calcutta therefore immediately directed Scrafton "to endeavour to get the best intelligence he can of all Sujait-Dowlah's (Shuja's) motions (movements)...". But obviously no definite evidence of the Nawab's hostile attitude could be discovered, for he was not meditating, at this time at least, an invasion of Bihar. His relation with Mir Jafar remained normal, and formal friendly letters continued to be exchanged between them.[1]

For the first time, in 1759, Shuja-ud-daulah betrayed a desire to interfere with the affairs in Bengal. Early in that year he instigated prince Ali Gohar and his own cousin Muhammad Quli Khan to lead an expedition of conquest to the eastern provinces, promising to join them as soon as he had made his preparations. But it should be remembered that his primary object in doing so was to get rid of his cousin and to tighten his grip on the Allahabad province, and not the conquest of Bengal which was with him only a secondary business. After he had forcibly occupied the Allahabad fort and imprisoned Muhammand Quli Khan's family and partisans, he remained quiet in his dominion, leaving his cousin and the prince to their own fate before the walls of Patna.

2. Shuja-ud-daulah's intended march towards Patna arouses English suspicion

Although Shah Alam's first invasion of Bihar had met with an ignominious failure, he did not give up his dream of the conquest of the eastern provinces. Having crowned himself as Emperor on 24th December, 1759, on receipt of the news that his father had fallen under the dagger of an assassin, and nominated Shuja-ud-daulah as his Wazir,[2] he invaded Bihar a second time ; but was again beaten back at the end of April 1760. Within a few months of his retreat, another political, revolution of far-reaching consequences was brought about at

Orme, Vol. II, pp. 280-282 ; Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., 1758, pp. 66-67 ; C. P. C., Vol. I, No. 310.
Sair, II. 676 ; T. M., 204b ; Tabsir, 592 ; Mirat, 246b-47a.

Murshidabad when on 20th October Mir Jafar was deposed and Mir Qasim placed on the throne, the Governor and the Council at Calcutta turning the occasion to their material advantage as also to that of the Company. At this very time Shah Alam was planning his third invasion of Bihar and soon after Mir Qasim's installation he took the field, but was finally routed by Carnac on 15th January, 1761. Law and his officers were taken prisoners, while the fallen Emperor had to throw himself on the protection of the English, who, being anxious to get their recent political transactions in Bengal legalised by imperial sanction, accorded him a very loyal and respectful reception and made a conditional promise to conduct him to Delhi.[1] Meanwhile the issue of the Maratha-Afghan contest, on which important Indian notables had concentrated their attention, treating the Bengal revolution as an insignificant local affair, had been finally decided, and after settling the Empire on Shah Alam the invader had returned to Kabul. Returning to Lucknow, Shuja-ud-daulah stayed there and ordered Muhammad Quli Khan and his son, confined in the Jalalabad fort outside the Lucknow city, to be put to death, for the Khan had appealed to the Durrani conqueror, while Shuja-ud-daulah was yet in the latter's camp, to effect his release, and although the Shah had refrained from interfering with what he obviously considered a private quarrel, the Nawab realised that it was dangerous to keep the Khan a prisoner.[2] This done, Shuja-ud-daulah began making his preparations for a march to Patna to conduct Shah Alam back to Delhi. He had been nominated Chancellor of the Exchequer by the new Emperor in December, 1759, and naturally his ambition was to walk in the footsteps of his father by occupying the position of a veritable dictator at Delhi and at the same

[1] Bengal Sel. Com's letter to Major Carnac, dated 17th February, 1761.

[2] Imad, 69; S. P. D., Vol. XXI, L. 206. Major Carnac's letter dated Bankipore, 20th March, 1761, in the Sel. Com. Progs., Vol. II, 110-114, 124-25.

time preserving and extending his hereditary dominion of Awadh and Allahabad.

The news of Shuja-ud-daulah's intention to march towards Bihar aroused endless suspicion in the minds of Mir Qasim and his creators, the English. Father Wendel, a French Jesuit in the service of Shuja-ud-daulah and also acting secretly as a spy of the English, reported in a confidential letter to the commander of the English troops at Patna that the Nawab had bargained with the Abdali king for the revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and that he was about to proceed towards Patna with the object of conquering and bringing those provinces under his possession. The suspicion was strengthened by Mir Qasim's letter to Vansittart, characterising Shuja-ud-daulah as "being extremely deceitful." Notwithstanding Major Carnac's belief to the contrary, the Governor and Council at Fort William gave credit to the news, and such a long and heated discussion as to the measures to be adopted to check the so-called invader took place at the meeting of the Select Committee on 28th March, 1761, that its proceedings filled several pages of the minute book.[1] It was eventually resolved to send a strong body of troops to the Karamnasa, if the news be correct, and negotiate, under its pressure with Shuja-ud-daulah, through the medium of Shah Alam. The Governor wrote to Ahmad Shah Abdali and Shuja-ud-daulah, professing loyalty to the new Emperor, and requested Shah Alam to mediate between him and the *approaching invader.* Meanwhile, it became known that the Emperor himself, being in correspondence with the Nawab of Awadh, was anxious to leave Patna and had requested Carnac to accompany him with some European troops to the Imperial capital. When this information was communicated to Calcutta, the Select Committee wrote to Carnac :—"This inclines us the more to believe the news of Shuja Dowlah's designs on Bengal may be true, and that the prince has intentions of joining him...". But the English fears, caused as they were by a baseless Shuja-

[1] C. P. C., Vol. I, No. 1038.

phobia, proved to be imaginary rather than real. The same Lucknow Jesuit reported, within a week of his former despatch, that the Awadh Nawab entertained no aggressive designs against Bengal,[1] and Major Carnac expressed his opinion about it in a letter to the Governor in the following words : "...Your apprehensions of Shujah-ud-daulah will have been removed by the letter I enclosed to you on the 24th ulto. from the *Padre* at Lucknow *wholly contradicting the news of his former letter*. Indeed I never gave the least credit to the first account as whoever has any knowledge of Shujah-ud-daulah's situation must be sensible that he has too much to fear for himself, and too much business upon his own hands, to attempt disturbing the peace of these provinces."[2]

All this time Shah Alam had been impatient for taking leave of the English and beginning his march to Delhi. Mir Qasim was equally desirous of seeing his embarrassing guest off as soon as possible. The Emperor, however, desired Major Carnac to escort him at least as far as Banaras, which was not possible for the Major to do without an express order from his superiors at Calcutta. He was at this time so well impressed by Carnac's attention and dissatisfied with Mir Qasim for lack of it that he proposed "giving us (the English) the *Subahdaree* of these provinces instead of Cossim Ally Cawn......". But although the Governor allotted Rs. 1,800 a day for his expenses he pursued a policy of caution, delayed proclaiming Shah Alam as Emperor and merely gave him vague assurances of his intention to escort him to Delhi. The Emperor's patience was exhausted by long waiting, and on 12th April he quitted Patna for his advance tents which had been pitched outside the city by his orders a few days before. On the 19th, Carnac informed the Fort William authorities that Shah Alam "does not think the assurances of your support and assistance so

[1] The Governor and Council's letter to Carnac, 28th Mar. 1761; C. P. C., Vol. I, Nos. 1042 and 1043 ; Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 1752. Vol. II, p. 127, also pp. 131 and 133.

[2] Carnac's letter from Patna, dated 6th April, Ibid, p. 147.

strong as to justify his waiting so many months for the fulfilling thereof......"[1] and that he was encamped outside Patna, ready to begin his march as soon as possible. On the 20th arrived at the capital of Bihar Muhammad Ali Khan, bearing letters from Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Durrani Wazir Shah Wali Khan and Shah Alam's own mother Zinat Mahal, which urged him in the most definite terms to come to Delhi as soon as possible and occupy his ancestral throne. News reached him at the same time that the Shah had returned to Afghanistan, and that Shuja-ud-daulah, having come back to Lucknow, was making preparations to set out to receive the Emperor and conduct him to the imperial capital. Shah Alam himself is said to have written to Shuja-ud-daulah summoning him to Patna without delay. The Governor and Council, therefore, directed Col. Eyre Coote to march to Patna to deal with the situation there, and on 8th May, 1761, they issued the following instructions to the Colonel : "If Shujah Dowlah advances towards Bengal, our army should march to the Caramnassa and by all means prevent his entering the province. As we conclude you and Shahzada will correspond with him, we must recommend it to you not to trust too much to negotiation." Mir Qasim, the new Nawab of Bengal, also urged the same course.[2]

3. Shuja-ud-daulah marches towards Bihar

By this time Shuja-ud-daulah, who had left Lucknow on or about 20th April,[3] 1761, had advanced within reach of Banaras, and written to Mir Qasim of his intention to visit Patna. To the English Governor, who he thought was Clive, entitled Sabit Jang, he wrote a letter in a domineering style,

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[1] Carnac's letter from Bankipore, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., 1761, Vol. II, pp. 138-39 ; Ghulam Ali. II, p. 70 ; Carnac's letter from Bankipore, dated 19th April, 1761, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., 1761. Vol. II, p. 151.

[2] Carnac's letter dated Camp at Bankipore, 22nd April, 1761, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., 1761, Vol. II, pp. 161-162, also 173 ; Manna Lal, p. 23 ; Ghulam Ali, II, 68-69 ; C. P. C., Vol. I, Nos. 1156 and 1167.

[3] Sair, III. 915.

demanding that like an humble subject he should make a suitable *peshkash* (tribute) to the Emperor, furnish him with necessary things (for his journey) and send him from Patna very soon, and threatening that if he made delay, the consequences "will not be good." About the same time came a letter from the Abdali's Prime Minister addressed to the commander of the English army, informing him that the Shah had conferred the kingdom of India on Shah Alam and directed Shuja-ud-daulah to escort him back to Delhi, and enjoining upon the English to dismiss the new Emperor with due honour and with the revenues of Bengal and a suitable force. Major Carnac returned a clear and dignified answer to Shuja-ud-daulah's letter, warning him against entering the boundary of Bihar, and informing him "that the English were not to be dictated or intimidated into any measure, that we had attached ourselves to the king......that Colonel Coote was making all possible speed hither to concert with His Majesty the most effectual means to fix him in his empire and that we should be greatly pleased with his concurrence in the accomplishment of so great a work, for which reason we heartily wished to enter into alliance with him (Shuja)......that his (Shuja's) attempting to come into ours (English territory) would obstruct the friendship we were desirous of cultivating with him......"[1]. Shah Alam also wrote to Shuja-ud-daulah advising him to remain encamped on the other side of the Karamnasa and not to cross the boundary of Bihar. Major Carnac kept his troops in readiness to resist the progress of the Nawab of Awadh, if the latter did not pay heed to their remonstrance, and assured his superiors in Calcutta that "should Shuja-ud-daulah however be foolish enough to enter our territories, I dare answer we have in this province a force sufficient to cope with him, for I have the same despicable opinion of his forces as of the other Hindostan Powers, when set in opposition to Europeans."[2]

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1 C. P. C., Vol. I, No. 1174. Shuja's letter in Sel. Com. Progs. of 20th May, 1761, Vol. II, pp. 183-84, 185-86, 182.

2 *Ibid*, pp. 182-83.

When these three letters reached Forts William, they were placed before a meeting of the Select Committee on 20th May, and the pros and cons of the situation were carefully discussed. It was resolved as a result of the deliberations that Mir Qasim and Major Carnac be directed to march to the Karamnasa to prevent disturbance (whatever be Shuja's real intention), and the Emperor should go along with the army and be allowed to join Shuja-ud-daulah on the other side of the river. "As this step will remove Shuja-ud-daulah's pretence," wrote the committee, 'for entering Bihar, it seems to be the most proper measure for securing the peace of these provinces, which must be our first care, and therefore, we recommend putting it immediately into execution."

Now Shuja-ud-daulah, having reached the outskirts of Banaras,[1] left that city on his right and turned to the road leading to the town of Ghazipur. He proceeded on by slow and leisurely marches, halting more than a day at almost every stage, probably with a view to getting reliable information of the impression that his movement had been producing at Patna and Calcutta. On 7th May (2nd Shawwal) he granted an interview to Sayyid Mahmud and Karam Shah, the envoys from Governor Vansittart and Major John Carnac, bearing letters from them to the Awadh Nawab, somewhere north of the Ganga and then arrived at Saidpur (Sayyidpur), 20 miles north-east of Banaras, on 11th May (6th Shawwal), *en route* to Ghazipur, 23 miles further east.[2] He seems to have now realised that the English were firm in their resolve not to permit him to set his foot on the soil of Bihar at any cost, and

Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., of 20th May, Vol. II, pp. 190-91.
Shuja halted near Banaras for three or four days. He issued strict orders to his troops not to molest anybody. The orders were strictly enforced, and there was no disturbance and no oppression of any kind. See Bal Krishna Dikshit's letter, dated Banaras, 21st May, 1761, in Rajwade, Vol. III, L. 522.
Letter of Sayyid Mahmud and Karam Shah from Shuja's camp given in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 1761, Vol. II, pp. 195-96.

hence he moderated the tone of his letters and this time sent a more reasonable reply to them, praising their firmness, fidelity to their plighted word and loyalty to the Emperor, informed the Governor of his arrival near the Ganga with the sole object of conducting the Emperor to Delhi, and called upon him to come out with the King at the head of a strong European force and assist him (Shuja) in settling the affairs of the Empire and giving repose to the people". "You must not delay on any account," he added, "as this is an opportunity not to be trifled away, when a great reputation throughout the Empire, and the regulation of the affairs thereof......may be your lot."[1] Whether Shuja-ud-daulah felt that with the English assistance the work of winning back the lost provinces and the re-organisation of the broken administration of the Empire would be comparatively easy and hence he sought their co-operation in clear unequivocal terms, or he only desired to humour them by making this offer, is more than can be asserted with certainty. Major Carnac had made a similar proposal requesting Shuja-ud-daulah to co-operate with the English in conducting the Emperor to Delhi and installing him on his ancestral throne. But neither of the parties seems to have been really in earnest. The English were certainly not anxious to incur the risk and expenditure of a distant expedition to Delhi, and Shuja-ud-daulah, who wished to reap all the advantages of the enterprise, could as certainly never brook an equal partner with similar pretentions. Be that as it may, Mr. Vansittart did not take Shuja-ud-daulah's proposal seriously and replied that the English were loyal and would escort the Emperor to his capital after the rainy season, and requested Shuja-ud-daulah "by no means to think of crossing the Karamnasa, but to meet the King on the confines of his dominion," as a great disturbance would ensue if he entered Bihar. At the same time he directed Col. Coote "to take measures to

[1] Shuja's letter in Bengal, Sel. Com. Progs. of 25th May, 1761, (see Vol. II of 1761, pp. 193-95, also Sayyid Mahmud and Karam Shah's letter referred to).

prevent his entering Bihar province if he should attempt it." Mir Qasim, who was even more suspicious of and hostile to Shuja-ud-daulah than the English, had been constantly urging them to send their troops to their western frontier to block the passage *of the invader* and now he prepared himself to proceed against the latter under the pretence of going to settle the affairs of Bhojpur.[1] Thus, backed by force, the clear and consistent English diplomacy triumphed eventually, and Shuja-ud-daulah was obliged to change his tone of haughty superiority to one of mild deference and to give up entirely his intention of proceeding beyond the eastern boundary of his *Subahs.* He remained encamped at Saidpur[2] till the Emperor, accompained by Major Carnac had arrived at the Karamnasa and the latter had taken leave of the former to return to Patna.

4. Shah Alam leaves Patna to join Shuja-ud-daulah

As Shah Alam's stay with the English was of great political advantage for the latter, they naturally desired him to continue his residence at Patna as long as possible. Realising that it was "better to keep the king in our hands than allow him to go in Shuja-Dowlah's" Colonel Eyre Coote, who had arrived at Patna a few days before, now made a serious and final attempt to induce him (Emperor) to postpone his departure to the end of the rainy season, when the English would be in a position, he said, to assist him with a good force. Mir Qasim, too, who had hitherto been anxious to get rid of the embarrassing presence of his nominal sovereign,[3] now came forward with the offer, of course, at the persuasion of the English commander, of paying Shah Alam a monthly subsidy of one lakh of rupees, if the latter cancelled his march. But he would not agree. So on 6th June, Eyre Coote and Mir Qasim repaired to his tents, a few stages west of the Patna

1 Vide Major Carnac's letter of 12th May, 1761. (See Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 1761, Vol. II. pp. 182, 197.
2 C. P. C., Vol. I; Nos. 1208 and 1216.
3 Mir Qasim feared that the Emperor being in the English hands the latter might make him confer the Subahdari of the three provinces on themselves.

city, to bid him good-bye. The Emperor, at the time of parting, expressing his appreciation of the fidelity of the English, remarked that they alone were capable of quietly conducting him to Delhi, and "wished most sincerely that nothing might intervene to disturb the friendship subsisting between us." Mir Qasim complained of the "threatening letters" that Shuja-ud-daulah had written him "concerning his want of attachment of His Majesty," and assured the latter of his loyalty by conviction as well as duty. The Emperor then conferred on both Mir Qasim and Col. Coote the rank of 7,000 in the Mughal peerage, and beginning his march (6th June) in the direction of Banaras, halted at the village of Suatpur, 6 miles west of Patna. Major John Carnac joined him with two hundred Europeans, a battalion of sepoys and 4 pieces of cannon. After a few days' journey they reached the eastern bank of the Karamnasa, where the English took leave of Shah Alam with due ceremony appropriate to the occasion, and the Emperor with his personal attendants crossed the river and landed on the territory of Shuja-ud-daulah about the middle[1] of June, 1761.

Thus melted away the immediate danger from Shuja-ud-daulah, if there had existed any danger at all. But the Government of Calcutta and their agents at Patna continued to harbour suspicion of his so-called designs on Bengal. Early in June, Eyre Coote despatched Mr. Lushington, one of the future victims of the infamous massacre of Patna, to Shuja-ud-daulah's court to explore the possibilities of making a treaty of alliance with him "or to find out his real intentions; which," wrote Coote to Calcutta, "if my information be true, are more on this country than any inclination he has of fighting the kings battles." He further informed the Governor that a few days back Shah Alam, during the course of a private conversation with him, "dropt some hints of Shujah Dowlah's

Col. Coote's letter, dated Patna, 6th June, 1761, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 13th June, 1761, Vol. II. pp. 224-26, also 218.

intentions of coming to settle this country (Bengal, etc.), which I look upon as his principal motive of getting the king to him." The Select Committee at Fort William, Calcutta, expressing the very same apprehensions in a letter to the Select Committee, Fort St. George, Madras, on 18th June, 1761, wrote that if Shah Alam marched to Delhi, then there was no fear for Bengal. "But, if on the contrary, any difficulties should arise and the king be detained in Shuja-ud-daulah's hands, we shall expect from the known views of the latter towards Bengal, that he will endeavour to persuade the king to turn his thoughts again this way."[1] It is significant that the contemporary *Persian and Marathi* authorities are totally silent on Shuja-ud-daulah's *views about Bengal*, and even a careful consideration of all the available evidence in *English* does not lead us to a clear and definite conclusion that he was at this time desirous of invading the Company's possessions. We know that, when two years after he espoused the cause of Mir Qasim against the English, he did it after a great deal of hesitation. The English suspicion seems to have been aroused by his usually aggressive conduct and ambitious nature no less than by his recent march towards Bihar. Major John Carnac, the commanding officer at Patna, well appreciated the difficulties of Shuja-ud-daulah's position, when he wrote : "whoever has any knowledge of Shuja-ud-daulah's situation, must be sensible that he has too much to fear himself, and too much business upon his own hands, to attempt disturbing the peace of these provinces." Subsequent events proved the soundness of the Major's views. The policy of suspicious watchfulness may not be commended, but it will have to be admitted that in practical politics it is the rule rather than the exception even in our times.

5. Shuja-ud-daulah conducts the Emperor to Jajmau

Having crossed the Karamnasa, Shah Alam entered into

Coote's letter to Bengal Sel. Com., dated Patna, 13th June, 1761 in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., 1761, Vol. II. pp. 225-26, also p. 237.

Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion. The latter, who was then encamped at Saidpur on the Ganga, quickly advanced south-eastward and respectfully waited upon the Emperor at the village of Sarai Sayyid Razi, 14 miles east of the now famous E. I. Railway Junction of Mughal Sarai on 19th June, 1761, (16th Ziqada, 1174 H.) and presented him 101 gold coins (mohars), together with a throne and a royal umbrella and other emblems of royalty which he had prepared for the purpose. Shah Alam bestowed upon him, besides the usual robe of honour, an elephant, a costly sword, a jewelled necklace, an enamelled *jighah* and a gold aigrette with a pedant, and his brothers-in-law Mirza Ali Khan and Salar Jang, and his chief followers, prominent among whom were Munim Khan and Rajah Daya Ram, received rich *khilaats*. On the 21st July, the march was resumed in the direction of Awadh,[1] and for some time Shuja-ud-daulah walked by the side of the imperial mount and took his seat in his conveyance only after the Emperor had graciously ordered him to do so. The party reached Banaras on 25th June,[2] and here more than three days' halt was made. The Emperor and Shuja-ud-daulah paid a visit to Shaikh Ali Hazin, a scholarly saint from Persia, who had settled at that holy town. At this place Mirza Amani, the eldest son of Shuja-ud-daulah interviewed Shah Alam, and he was granted a *khilaat* (robe)

Carnac's letter, dated Patna, 6th April, 1761, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., 1761, Vol. II. 147; Ghulam Ali, II. 81-83; M. L., 28-29; Tabsir, 623; T. M., 216a; Sair, III. 916; Maadan, IV. 219B; Khair-ud-din, 95. Mirat (p. 353a) says that he saw the Emperor at 10 A. M. on 17th Ziqada. There is some confusion of dates in Ghulam Ali's work. It seems to imply *Shawwal* whereas the month in question is Ziqada.

Ghulam Ali, II. 83; M. L., 29; Mirat, 253a; Mutakherin, 205a; Balkrishna Dikshit's letter, dated Banaras, 28th June, 1761, in Rajwade, III. L. 523; S. P. D., Vol. XXIX L. 13 gives 24th June (Jeth Badi 7th) I prefer the former (Jeth Badi 8th) for Dikshit was then in Banaras and his letter was written only three days after Shuja's arrival there.

of six pieces, a jewelled aigrette and a costly tuft (kalgi). The title of Asaf-ud-daulah, by which he is known to historians, was conferred upon him, and he was enrolled as a *mansabdar* in the Mughal service and appointed to the responsible post of Superintendent of Imperial Artillery, with Fatah Ali Khan, a grandson of Ismail Khan, as his deputy in this office (26th or 27th June, 1761). From Banaras they marched, after several stages, on to the village of Jhusi opposite Allahabad fort, where the Ganga was crossed on 8th July, and then after a short halt at the town of Allahabad, they journeyed to Jajmau, 2 miles south-east of the modern city of Kanpur, reaching it on 23rd July,[1] 1761. It was decided to spend here the four months of the rainy season and therefore neat improvised huts of mud and straw were erected for the troops, and they went into cantonments for the rains.

6. A Grab for the Doab

The Maratha defeat at Panipat had completely undermined the foundation of their administration in North India, and swept away their rule from the Doab and Bundelkhand along with their dominance at the Imperial court. There was now a sudden scramble for the land belonging to the Marathas. The Ruhela and Bangash Pathans burning with an ambition for expansion and ever on the look-out for such a heaven-sent opportunity, moved out of their homes, soon after the Maratha disaster at Panipat, and quickly occupied almost the whole of the Doab. Najib-ud-daulah annexed the whole of the Pathargarh district, Hafiz Rahmat Khan made himself master of Bhongaon, Etawah, Mainpuri and a few other *parganahs* in the neighbourhood, Dunde Khan established his hold over Moradabad and Shikohabad and the neighbouring *Mahals*, and Ahmad Khan Bangash captured all the territory from Sikandra to Akbarpur (both in the modern Kanpur district). The Bangash chief was even anxious to bring under his sway the

[1] Ghulam Ali, II. 87, 93 ; M. L., 30, 34 ; Mirat, 253a ; Mutakherin, 205a ; Tabsir, 623-24 ; Maadan, IV. 219b ; Sair, III. p. 916.

sarkar of Kora Jahanabad (modern Fatehpur district) as far as the confines of the Allahabad district.[1] Shuja-ud-daulah's Government did not lag behind anybody in turning the Maratha reverse to its advantage. We have seen (vide chapter V) how Gopal Rao Ganesh, *Faujdar* of Kora Jahanabad and Krishnanand, *Faujdar* of Kara, who had raided Awadh while the rival Maratha and Afghan forces were engaged in a deadly struggle at Panipat, had been defeated and driven out. It was now the turn of the Awadh troops under Rajah Beni Bahadur to wreak vengeance by invading Kara and Kora, and as soon as the result of the Maratha-Afghan contest had become known, the Rajah crossed the Ganga into the Kara district, drove out Krishnanand and occupied that region. Then he proceeded to Kora Jahanabad. This district had been conquered and annexed to Awadh by Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk in November, 1735, and since then it had formed part of his dominion. But the Marathas, ever anxious to acquire this fertile tract, had obtained a *sanad* for it from Wazir Imad-ul-mulk, and wrested it from the hands of Shuja-ud-daulah's agent Baqrullah Khan after having defeated him in a well-contested engagement in February,[2] 1756. Now the Maratha rule in that region having been shaken to its very foundations, no sooner did Beni Bahadur set his foot in the district than all its *parganahs* passed under his control without any opposition. It was the harvest season and the *rabi* crops were being gathered, and hence the Rajah successfully endeavoured to collect a part of the revenue from the zamindars and the cultivators. Shuja-ud-daulah's rule was thus pretty well re-established. The time having coincided with that of the Nawab's march towards Patna to conduct Shah Alam back to Delhi, it seems to have occurred to him that without Maratha help it would be well nigh impossible for him to install the Emperor on his ancestral throne, and accordingly he wrote to Malhar Rao Holkar, offering to deliver back to

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[1] Khair-ud-din, p. 101 ; Ashob, Vol. II. p. 56.
[2] S. P. D., Vol. XXVII. L. 215.

him the districts of Kara and Kora, ostensibly in lieu of the Maratha armed support in his proposed undertaking to Delhi. Malhar Rao seems to have welcomed the proposal, and he directed Gopal Rao Ganesh, formerly the *Faujdar* of Kara and now in charge of Kalpi, to march to Kora and take possession of the district from Beni Bahadur. By Shuja-ud-daulah's orders the *sarkar* of Kara (also known as Kara-Manikpur) was peacefully returned to the Marathas ; but notwithstanding his positive instructions, Beni Bahadur did not feel inclined to deliver Kora to the Holkar's[1] agent, and on receipt of the information that Vankat Kashi Rao Deshmukh, a clerk of Gopal Rao Ganesh, was coming to take delivery of it, he made over all the fourteen *mahals* of the district with their police stations (*thanas*) together with Kora proper (Haveli) to Rup Singh Chaudhari (son of Bhagwant Singh Khichar who had met a warrior's death at the hands of Saadat Khan in November, 1735), and himself crossed the Ganga back to Lucknow. In his endeavour to re-establish Maratha rule in the district, Vankat Rao met with a tragic end. He was invited to a peace conference and there treacherously stabbed to death with a dagger by Rup Singh himself, and his troops were set upon and scattered. Informed of this outrage, Gopal Rao quickly marched to Kora and entered the town on 24th April, 1761, (19th Ramzan, 1174 H.). Thence he told off 2,000 of his troops to occupy the important *parganahs*, and these, driving out Rup Singh Khichar's men, established their outposts at Bidki and Kunwarpur. The fort of Fatehpur, the modern headquarters of the district, was besieged and captured within 4 days, and Hasua followed suit. Rup Singh with his family and dependants, 5 to 7 thousand horse and 3,000 foot now took shelter in the fort of Ghazipur, (8 miles north of the Yamuna and 9 miles south-west of Fatehpur), which was closely invested by Gopal Rao Ganesh. This fort was sufficiently strong and well provisioned ; the siege was protracted, and two and a half months' effort on the part of the

[1] S. P. D., Vol. XXVII. L. 263, XXIX. L. 6.

besiegers proved of little avail. The Marathas struggled in vain to reduce the fort, and the Khichars toiled as bravely to defend their ancestral fief, and we find that although by the end of April, 1762, the Marathas had succeeded in recovering possession of the whole of the district, the fort of Ghazipur remained in the hands of Rup Singh Khichar.[1]

In other parts of the rich and fertile Doab the Maratha rule met with the same fate. Early in 1761, everywhere powerful zamindars had risen in rebellion and driven out the Deccani revenue and police officers whose oppression and extortions had been green in their memory. The big influential chieftains had endeavoured to banish the trace of Maratha influence from the Doab. We have seen how Najib-ud-daulah and other trans-Ganga Ruhelas and the Bangash Pathans had managed to bring the Maratha upper Doab under their control. But the departure of the Abdali back to Kabul, and his firm resolve to have nothing to do with the administration of India, together with a knowledge of the definite leanings[2] of the new Emperor Shah Alam towards the Marathas combined to produce a change in the angle of vision of those Muslim chiefs who had helped to make the Panipat campaign a success. Realising that they were even at that time not a negligible factor in North-Indian politics, Najib-ud-daulah, the Ruhelas, the Bangash chief and Shuja-ud-daulah sent their wakils to the Marathas, offering to return their (Maratha) possessions in the Doab, if the latter sent their agents to take charge of the same. Shah Alam seconded the proposal, and Maratha officers were despatched to occupy the districts.[3] In fulfilment of the promise, Shuja-ud-daulah made over to them the *sarkars* of Kara-Manikpur and Kora-Jahanabad, but the Ruhelas showed no disposition to relinquish the upper Doab. As a result of two pitched battles with the Ruhelas, Balaji Govind succeeded in wresting the fortified towns of Mangalpur and Phaphund from their unwilling hands. The

[1] S. P. D., Vol. XXVII. L. 263. XXIX. Ls. 5 and 6, 40.
[2] S. P. D., Vol. XXVII. L. 263.
[3] S. P. D., Vol. XXVII. L. 272.

defeated Ruhela troops, feeling their position untenable, evacuated some of the other places in the vicinity of Phaphund after overrunning and plundering them thoroughly. But the Marathas could not take possession of all these places, as some of the local zamindars like Khushhal Singh and Pancham Singh defied the Deccan troops from their mud forts and completely ravaged the land, leaving nothing in the houses of the ryots. Hafiz Rahmat and Dunde Khan, moving out of Aonla, had already possessed themselves of Shikohabad, and Ahmad Khan Bangash, although outwardly professing friendship, was equally hostile to the Marathas. The zamindars of almost all the districts of the Doab (including those of Kora and Kara) managed to retain many a fort in their hands and evaded payment of revenue.[1] Notwithstanding the clever Maratha policy of threat and conciliation, Rajah Ganga Singh (a descendant of Hindu Singh Chandel of the time of Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk), the ruler of Sachendi estate, surrendered the fort of Sachendi only, and refused to deliver other fortalices in his *parganahs*. The Rani of Shivrajpur bravely resisted the Maratha attempt to capture her principal fort, and the Maratha agents felt that there was little prospect of success in the realisation of tribute from the *taluqdars* of those parts. Little could be realised from the cultivators, as the zamindars had left practically nothing with them.[2]

7. Shuja-ud-daulah in Bundelkhand ; Fall of Kalpi and Jhansi

The whole of the region known as Bundelkhand, except the *sarkar* of Kalpi, (which formed part of the Agra province) was included in the Mughal *Subah* of Allahabad from the time of Akbar to that of Muhammad Shah, when about the year 1730 it was conquered by the Marathas under their brave leader Peshwa Bajirao and thence it ceased to be a part of the Mughal Empire. In 1748, the province of Allahabad was added to the Awadh Nawab's hereditary possessions, but Safdar Jang never attempted to bring its unnatural

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1 S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. L. 6, 5.

2 S. P. D., XXI. L. 206 ; Vol. XXIX. L. 6.

adjunct (Bundelkhand) under his control, and it continued under the Maratha sway till 1761—the fateful year which witnessed their great military eclipse at Panipat, and as a consequence threw their rule in the north into utter confusion. Even before the issue of the Panipat campaign had been decided the Maratha supremacy in Bundelkhand was seriously challenged by some of the local notables. The Rajah of Datia, one of the several tributaries, had already rebelled and overthrown the Maratha administration in his part of Bundelkhand. Some other Bundelas, following his example, plundered ten to fiften villages in the vicinity of Jhansi and captured some Maratha outposts. Bhadawar too endeavoured to shake off the Deccani yoke. The Rajah of Gohad refused to remit the annual tribute, and so did other petty chiefs. Gwalior seemed to be in imminent danger of falling into the hands of the rebels.[1]

The most powerful chief in Bundelkhand at this time was Rajah Hindupati, the second great-grandson of the famous Chhatrasal Bundela of the time of Aurangzeb, and he had ascended his ancestral *gaddi* after having defeated and slain his elder brother Aman Singh in August, 1757. But a third brother, namely Khet Singh, lived to remain a thorn in Hindupati's side. Other Bundela chiefs of note were Guman Singh and Khuman Singh, sons of Jagat Raj, the second son of Chhatrasal, both masters of sufficiently big and flourishing States and tributaries to the Marathas. As soon as the result of the Panipat campaign became known, Hindupati and Khet Singh, who were usually at loggerheads, united together to resist the Maratha claim to tribute.[2] Other Bundela chieftains followed their example, and the whole province was in a ferment.

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[1] S. P. D., Vol. XXVII. L. 272, 273. For the previous history of Bhadawar see my *First Two Nawabs of Awadh*, pp. 54-55.

[2] Hindupati was son of Maha Singh, son of Hirde Shah, son of Chhatrasal. S. P. D., Vol. XXI. L. 124 ; Vol. XXIX. L. 7 ; Hadiqa, pp. 670-71.

Shuja-ud-daulah, who had been eagerly looking forward to such a day, welcomed the opportunity. One of the most cherished objects of his foreign policy was the subjugation of Bundelkhand of which, in view of his holding the viceroyalty of Allahabad, he considered himself to be the legitimate master.[1] During the imperial stay at Allahabad early in July, 1761, he obtained Shah Alam's approval to this his favourite scheme, and it was decided that the recovery of Bundelkhand should precede the imperial march to Dehli. Accordingly, after the rainy season was over, Shuja-ud-daulah removed from Lucknow his family and treasure under the charge of his son Asaf-ud-daulah to Allahabad to be lodged safely in the fort there, and made his preparations to undertake the conquest of Bundelkhand. Mahmud Khan, son of Ahmad Khan Bangash, and some Ruhelas sent by Hafiz Rahmat and Dunde Khan and four big Rajahs joined the imperialists,[2] and the party with the Emperor at its head, left Jajmau on 7th November, 1761 (9th Rabi II 1175 H.), crossed the Yamuna and arrived at Kalpi on 11th December. Before crossing the Yamuna, Shuja-ud-daulah had sent Beni Bahadur to Lucknow to attend to the needs of the *Subahs* during his absence, and had issued *parwanas* calling upon Balaji Govind and Ganesh Shambhaji, the Maratha officers in charge of Kalpi and Jhansi respectively, to come and humbly wait on the Emperor. Turning traitor to the Peshwa's salt, Ganesh Shambhaji, who had already been in a sort of veiled revolt against the Maratha Government, now opened treasonable negotiations with Shuja-ud-daulah. After an indiscriminate plunder of Jhansi, he threw 52 of his Maratha colleagues into gaol, and then entered into an agreement with Shuja-ud-daulah, through the latter's officer and

[1] Imad, 86.

[2] S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. Ls. 23 and 24. The writer of these letters Badri Keshava, wrongly imagined that Shuja made these preparations to conduct the Emperor to Delhi. Newsletter from the Emperor's camp, dated 11th and 12th December, 1761, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 19th January, 1762.

friend Anup Giri Gosain, promising to betray Jhansi in return for a guarantee that he would be taken in the imperial service and given the same post and authority which he had been enjoying under the Maratha Government. Shuja-ud-daulah readily accepted the offer and sent him an imperial rescript, appointing Ganesh Shambhaji an officer in the Mughal service. On the Wazir-designate's approach to Kalpi, Ganesh Shambhaji with his accomplice Viswas Rao repaired to that place and waited upon the former and the Emperor. Kalpi fell without a blow, the Maratha officer in charge of the place having fled away, without offering even the least show of resistance, before the arrival of the imperialists. Asmat-ullah Khan, formerly tutor to Asaf-ud-daulah and probably the Wazir's instrument in winning over Ganesh Shambhaji, was honoured by an imperial *khilaat*. The rabble of Shah Alam's army plundered the town after which Shuja-ud-daulah set to work to make arrangements for its administration and that of the district, and this necessitated a few days' halt.[1]

Leaving the Emperor encamped at Kalpi, Shuja-ud-daulah now proceeded towards Jhansi, another important centre of Maratha influence in Bundelkhand, and detached a small contingent of troops under Sidi Bashir Khan[2] to reduce and obtain possession of the important village of Moth (31 miles north-east of Jhansi and formerly a *jagir* of the famous Naga commander, Rajendra Giri). The Khan besieged the fort and captured it after a few days' fighting which cost the lives of a good number of the Maratha defenders. The fall of Moth struck terror into the heart of the Maratha Governor of Jhansi, and he offered to submit and pay a tribute of three lakhs of rupees, if he were allowed to retain possession of the fort. Conscious of his superiority and bent upon subjugating the whole of that tract, Shuja-ud-daulah, however, declined the

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1 S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. Ls. 22, 45, 32. Ghulam Ali, II. 112-13 ; M. L., 39 ; Tabsir, 624 ; Khair-ud-din, 102 ; Imad, 80.

2 S.P.D., Vol. XXIX. L. 37; Khair-ud-din, p. 102, and Ashob, Vol. II. 69 ; Ghulam Ali, II. 113-114.

offer, and pushed on to Jhansi. A regular investment of the fort was quickly made. The Marathas made a bold stand for many a day, but being hopelessly outnumbered and exposed to the steady and effective fire from Shuja-ud-daulah's batteries to which they could make no reply, and there being no prospect of reinforcement from any quarter, they surrendered the fort on 31st February, 1762. The whole district was cleared off the enemy, and the imperial rule re-established there. Muhammad Bashir was appointed its Faujdar and the revenue of the district was farmed out to Ganesh Shambhaji for a fixed sum of money.[1]

8. Shuja-ud-daulah appointed Wazir

Shuja-ud-daulah had been nominated Wazir as early as 24th December, 1759, when Shah Alam had crowned himself Emperor, and he had begun functioning as such, and the new Mughal sovereign had fallen pretty completely under his influence almost the very day he had welcomed him back from Bihar at Sarai Sayyid Razi on 19th July, 1761. But about eight months had elapsed, and he had not been formally invested with the robe of that exalted office, as Imad-ul-mulk, who had occupied the First Minister's seat during the last three reigns, if we include the mock sovereignty of Shah Jahan II, and had been re-appointed by no less a personage than the victor of Panipat, still aspired for it. But the prospects of his successfully playing the role of Chancellor over again with the Abdali support crumbled away with the end of the year 1761, and Shah Alam felt himself free to raise Shuja-ud-daulah publicly to that position. The latter had by his recent exertions in the cause of the empire demonstrated his loyalty

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[1] S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. L. 34 ; Ghulam Ali, II. 114-115; Sair, III. 816. Tabsir, 624 and T. M., 216a have 5th Rajib which corresponds to 30th January, 1762. I prefer the date given by the Marathi letter which is absolutely contemporary. Ghulam Ali, II. 112-114 ; M. L., 38-43 ; Tabsir, 624 ; Khair-ud-din, 102-3 ; Sair, III. 916 ; T. M., 216a and b ; Maadan, IV. 219b-220a ; Mirat, 253b; Mutakherin, 205b ; S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. Ls. 22, 23, 24, 32, 34, 37, 45 and 46.

to the throne and fitness for the office, and Shah Alam was glad to invest him formally with the robe of the Prime Minister's post on 15th February, 1762 (21st Rajjab, 1175 H.), conferring upon him a *khilaat* of seven pieces with a special dress for wazirship, a necklace of pearls and a jewelled pen-case. There is reason to believe, although there is no definite record to show it, that the new Wazir was raised to the *mansab* of 8,000 *zat* and 8,000 *sawar*—the rank reserved for the first noble and officer of the Empire. After the investiture, Shuja-ud-daulah, dressed in the Wazir's robe, held court and for the first time signed the papers of his office.[1] On the eighteenth the Wazir's son Asaf-ud-daulah was appointed Superintendent of the Private Audience Hall (*Diwan-i-Khas*) in addition to his former office of *Mir Atish*, and Asmat-ullah Khan was nominated as his deputy for the new post. Certain other appointments were also made. Najib-ud-daulah, then the sole director of affairs at Delhi, was confirmed as Pay-Master General (*Mir Bakhshi*), Mumtaz-ud-daulah became second *Bakhshi* and Mirza Muhammad Ali Khan, entitled Salar Jang (brother-in-law of Shuja-ud-daulah) was raised to be third *Bakhshi*. The office of fourth Bakhshi was conferred upon Ahmad Khan Bangash. Munir-ud-daulah, who was to figure in years to come as the most important of the men round the person of Shah Alam, was put in charge of the offices of Lord High Steward (Khan-i-Saman), and Diwan of *Tan* (assigned lands) and Khalsa (crown lands).[2]

9. The First Expedition against Hindupati, March-April, 1762

The fall of Jhansi and with it the north-western corner of Bundelkhand proved to be an event of great political importance, and it had wide repercussions in and out of the land of the Bundela Rajputs. The Maratha expulsion from that corner of this wild region was looked upon as a definite triumph

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1 Delhi Chronicle, p. 190 ; M. L., 43 ; Abdul Karim, 299 ; Sair, III. 916 ; T. M., 216b ; Khair-ud-din, 103 ; Ashob, II. 70 ; Maadan, Vol. IV. 220a ; Tabsir, 625.

2 T. M., 216b ; Sair, III. 916 ; Khair-ud-din, 103.

of the Mughal arms, and it aroused temporary hopes of the rejuvenation of the Empire. Most of the ruling chiefs of Bundelkhand now sent in congratulatory messages and presents, and some of the most important among them, such as Rajah Savant Singh of Orchha and Rajah Indrajit Singh of Datia, came in person and waited upon the Wazir and the Emperor. A few *parganahs* of each of the two states of Orchha and Datia were taken out of the Rajahs' hands and annexed to the Empire and Shuja-ud-daulah appointed officers to take charge of them, while they (the Rajahs) were confirmed in the possession of the bulk of their territories. Rajah Pahad Singh (younger brother of Kirat Singh), a son of Jagat Rai and a grandson of Chhatrasal Bundela, offered his allegiance and entered the imperial service. Such distant rulers as the chiefs of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur, etc., who had for years maintained an attitude of indifference, now sent their agents and representatives with suitable presents. But Rajah Hindupati, lord of the major part of Bundelkhand, adopted an attitude of disdainful aloofness, and trusting to the plentiful resources of his country and the might of his troops, refrained from complying with the usual formality of sending a congratulatory message on the recent success of the imperial arms, and provoked the wrath of the Wazir by giving shelter to the Maratha refugees from Kalpi and Jhansi. But as an invader in the person of Shuja-ud-daulah at this time threatened the independent existence of the Bundela chiefs, no less than that of the Marathas in that region, Hindupati seems to have now realised the imperative need of a change in his policy, and had recourse to the expediency of making a common cause with the latter against the Mughal intruders. This proud ruler wielded authority over an extensive State with an annual income of ninety lakhs of rupees, besides a crop of wealth from a diamond mine, and had, on the intimation of the approaching danger, raised an army of 70,000 troops.[1] Shuja-ud-daulah's recent successes had whetted his desire for

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[1] Imad, 87.

the conquest of the rest of Bundelkhand, and Hindupati's haughty attitude of defiance coupled with the Nawab's claim to that province as a legitimate part of Allahabad and his right as Wazir to recover the lost provinces of the Mughal Empire, afforded him plausible pretexts for an expedition against the Rajah.

Taking Shah Alam with him, Shuja-ud-daulah entered into the heart of Bundelkhand some time in March-April, 1762, and made an earnest endeavour to corrupt and win over Hindupati's important friends and relations. The Rajah, informed of the Nawab's policy of sowing discord among his partisans, exhorted his cousins Guman Singh and Khuman Singh to unite their forces with his and stand on defence in case the Nawab-Wazir invaded their territory ; but if he seized the Maratha lands only, they should remain absolutely neutral.[1] Meanwhile, the invader had, by way of Jalalpur (31st March), advanced within a few leagues of Mahoba and plundered some of the *parganahs* of Hindupati's dominion. The *mahals* of Mahoba and Charkhari and a few others, which were very populous, were devastated and burnt. But the imperialists, oppressed by the thought of the enemy's resources and military strength, did not proceed further. Hindupati, who was now aroused from his torpor of pride, felt equally apprehensive of the consequences of an open trial of strength with Shuja-ud-daulah's superior might and prestige. Hence he sent a message to the Emperor, dwelling on the impropriety on the part of the Mughal sovereign to have come in person at the head of a mighty force against a petty zamindar like himself ; for a success against him would by no means redound to the imperial credit, while a defeat would lead to an unheard-of fall in the prestige and glory of the Crown, and it might even mean a political set-back of the imperial schemes. The Rajah professed allegiance and expressed his readiness to pay an annual tribute. Shuja-ud-daulah was anxious to make Hindupati yield one of his principal forts and

[1] Imad, 87.

his diamond mine which was reputed to have been worth 150 lakhs annually ;[1] but as he had just received disquieting tidings of a rebellion in Awadh and the presence of the Afghan invader (Abdali) in the Punjab, he was averse to engage himself in a long and hazardous contest, and was therefore in a mood to treat. As a result of negotiations it was settled that Hindupati should pay a fine of seventy-five lakhs of rupees and an annual tribute of twenty-five lakhs. The Rajah submitted to the terms, and represented that it being the harvest season, he would not be in a position to realise the revenue and clear off his obligations unless the imperial troops were withdrawn from his territory. This was done and the Emperor and Shuja-ud-daulah began their return march from Bundelkhand sometime in April, 1762, leaving Agha Ismail, a *risaldar* in the Nawab-Wazir's army, to realise the *peshkash* and tribute promised by Hindupati.[2]

10. A Rebellion in Awadh

For full two generations Shuja-ud-daulah's ancestors had ruled over Awadh and had followed an enlightened policy of conciliation towards the barons of the province. But a few of the powerful and turbulent families of landlords, cherishing their traditional ideals of freedom and sovereignty, had never really submitted to the Nawabi yoke. Averse to pay the yearly revenue save at the point of the bayonet, the heads of these houses were never slow to take advantage of the Nawab-Wazir's political or financial difficulties or his long absence from his provinces. One of these formidable and freedom-loving Awadh chiefs was the ruler of Tiloi, named Balbhadra Singh, whose grandfather Rajah Mohan Singh had

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1 Newsletter to Ellis from the Emperor's camp, and a letter from Father Wendel from Lucknow, dated 29th March, 1762, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 19th April and 26th June, 1762.

2 Khair-ud-din, 104-105 ; Ghulam Ali, II, 137-38 ; M. L., 44 (merely alludes to it) ; Ashob, II, 72-73 ; Imad, 86-87. Newsletter to Mr. Ellis from the Emperor's camp and Fr. Wendel's letter from Lucknow, dated 29th March, 1762, in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 19th April and 26th June, 1762.

paid dearly with his life for his brave and patriotic resistance to Saadat Khan's efforts to subjugate his domain, and whose uncle Nawal Singh had given unremitting trouble and vexation to Safdar Jang.[1] Balbhadra Singh, the worthy son of a worthy sire, had already given proof of his hostility to Shuja-ud-daulah's Government by making a common cause with the Maratha raiders of Awadh early in January, 1761. In the first quarter of 1762, he again snatched at an opportunity of defying the Nawabi administration. Taking advantage of Shuja-ud-daulah's absence in Bundelkhand, he collected a large number of troops (according to Imad 30,000, which seems to be exaggerated), and made a bid for independence. Having openly rebelled against the Nawab-Wazir's rule, Balbhadra with his troops and auxiliaries invaded the flourishing towns and villages in the neighbourhood of Rai Bareli, and harassed the provincial officers in every conceivable manner. "And at his hands," writes the annalist of the court of Shuja-ud-daulah's son, "the life of the *amils* (revenue officers) had become unbearable" (literally, had come to their lips). The news of this outbreak had necessitated, as we have seen, the patching up of a peace with Hindupati and the quick return of Shuja-ud-daulah to Awadh some time in May,[2] 1762. Shah Alam now went into cantonment at Shivrajpur, 20 miles north-west of Kanpur, to spend the rainy season there, while the Wazir proceeded to his capital with all possible speed, and from there he despatched a powerful regiment of his troops to chastise the Rajah of Tiloi. Balbhadra Singh met with a serious reverse, and his raw levies were put to flight, while he himself, attended by a few of his devoted followers, hastily fled to the jungle. We are in the dark about the further measures adopted by the Lucknow court to curb the activities of the Rajah. It is

[1] For a detailed account of the rebellions of the rulers of Tiloi, see my *First Two Nawabs of Awadh.*

[2] Imad, 87. Newsletter to Mr. Ellis, dated the Emperor's camp, 10th Ziqada, 1175 H. (2nd June, 1762) in Bengal Sel. Com. Progs. of 26th June, 1762 ; Ghulam Ali, 140.

certain that Balbhadra continued to live and give trouble to the Wazir's Government for some years more.[1]

11. The Second Expedition against Hindupati, December, 1762

It has been related in a previous section that Rajah Hindupati of Mahoba had bowed before the inevitable and bound himself to pay an annual tribute besides handsome presents to the Emperor and the Wazir in April, 1762. But as soon as the army of invasion had turned its back, the Rajah put off the payment on one pretext or another and treated the Wazir's demands with scant attention. His refractoriness was rankling like a thorn in Shuja-ud-daulah's bosom, and some of his chief officers, especially Rajah Himmat Bahadur who had a personal interest in the affairs of Bundelkhand, to which he and his late Guru Rajendra Giri had originally belonged, urged the renewal of the expedition. But the Wazir, fully aware of the Bundela gallantry and of the magnitude of Hindupati's strength, postponed the very idea of it till Himmat Bahadur reported that he had managed to secure the services of an Afghan warrior, who was now an arch enemy of Hindupati, but had once enjoyed his intimate friendship and favour and had commanded a part of his forces for many years, and hence was likely to be a most valuable ally in a war with the chief of Mahoba. The stout-bodied, high-souled youth was Karamat Khan, sister's son of Rahim Khan, a Pathan resident of Fatehpur (then a small town in the district of Kora Jahanabad), both of whom had been exceptionally brave and loyal officers in Hindupati's army. Karamat fell out with his master on the question of a dancing girl, resigned his post in anger and with all his troops retired to Fatehpur, where he came in touch with Himmat Bahadur through whom he entered Shuja-ud-daulah's service. As the Khan was burning with a feeling of revenge against the Bundela Rajah, he became

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[1] Imad, p. 87. A family history of the Chief Clans of Roy Bareilly district, by Bennett, p. 42.

an object of special patronage by the Wazir, and was made the recipient of a rich robe of honour (of seven pieces), with a jewelled aigrette, a necklace of corals, a sword, a shield, a fringed palanquin and the title of *Bahadur*. He was associated with Himmat Bahadur in the command of the expedition against Bundelkhand, of which the latter was appointed the chief officer, and further given the privilege of sanctioning papers relating to the army expenditure to the amount of five thousand rupees without reference to the higher authorities. The Wazir sought English aid, but months of negotiation proved futile. The invaders crossed the Yamuna and began their march towards Mahoba in December, 1762, with 25,000 troops in all, of whom 20,000 belonged to Himmat Bahadur and the remaining were the old followers and new recruits who had gathered under the banner of Karamat Khan.[1]

The news of the invasion under the special guidance of Karamat Khan, who had been like a brother to the Rajah and possessed an intimate knowledge of his country and people, his resources and strength, the weakness of his position and the vulnerable points in his defence, filled Hindupati with dismay. Hindupati soon collected a powerful force, 80,000 strong, and advanced from his capital and arrayed his troops in battle order, dividing them into two main divisions, one under his personal command, assisted by Rahim Khan, whom he seated on an elephant near his own as a precaution against treachery, faced Himmat Bahadur, while the other composed of 12,000 veteran Bundela troops of the *Karchal* denomination, whose bravery was proverbial in Bundelkhand, was despatched against Karamat Khan who was leading the van of the army of invasion. Himmat Bahadur's troops could not for long stand the fierce spear charges of the Bundela horsemen, and within a few hours the Naga army fled from the field in precipitation. In another corner of the field, Karamat Khan led an attack on the Rajputs and overcame them with slaughter; but

[1] Mirat, 254a.

he himself was badly injured, having received nineteen wounds (according to another account, twelve wounds on his face and thirty on his body), and was utterly exhausted. His brave soldiers received four to five wounds each. And yet he pushed on, and turning towards Hindupati's elephant was about to attack him with a spear, when a bullet struck him in the chest, and he fell down from the effect of his wounds. At this time a Bundela horseman jumped down, cut off Karamat's head and carried it in triumph to the Rajah. Hindupati thanked God for the success, but in honour of the memory of the brave Pathan youth (Karamat), whom he had looked upon as a brother, he observed mourning and refrained from striking the music of victory.

Overwhelmed with shame, Himmat Bahadur returned to Awadh, and fell under his master Shuja-ud-daulah's disfavour.[1]

12. Shuja-ud-daulah seeks English Aid

Before Shuja-ud-daulah could fit out a second expedition against Hindupati, he had felt it necessary to augment his military strength by seeking aid from a neighbouring State. We have no means of ascertaining the immediate object which the new Wazir sought to achieve with outside assistance. Three important problems were at that time engaging the attention of Shuja-ud-daulah, and it seems certain that he strongly desired English co-operation in the solution of one or all of them. Early in 1762, Ahmad Shah Abdali had poured his mobile Afghan cavalry into the Punjab, and was still busy in a campaign to extirpate the Sikhs. This invasion sent a thrill of fear throughout Hindustan, and Shuja-ud-daulah in common with other Indian princes felt apprehensive of the Shah's designs.[2] In utter disregard of

Imad, p. 88; Khair-ud-din, p. 110; Ghulam Ali, II, 144-48; M. L., 52-53 ; Ashob, II, 74-82 ; Imad, 87-88 ; Khair-ud-din, 108-12 ; Mirat, 253b-254a ; Ahwal, 206a.

Extracts from a letter from Lucknow to Mr. Ellis, dated 16th September, 1762. (See I. O. Correspondence of 1762, pp. 235-36). Ellis says that he wanted help against the Abdali.

his services in the campaign of 1761, the Shah had preferred Imad-ul-mulk's claim to the wazirship, and it was therefore natural for him to have been hostile to the schemes of the foreign invader. Moreover, there was a probability of an alliance between the Shah, Najib-ud-daulah, Imad-ul-mulk and the Jats under Surajmal,[1] and Shuja-ud-daulah was anxious to remain prepared for any emergency. Then there was the problem of escorting Shah Alam to Delhi and installing him upon his ancestral throne—a task beyond the strength of Shuja-ud-daulah to perform single-handed.[2] And finally the Nawab-Wazir had been baffled by Hindupati in his long-cherished design of bringing the whole of Bundelkhand into his possession, and he was anxious to renew his expedition of conquest of that region at the earliest possible opportunity. Hence he stood in need of outside help, and begged the English Governor of Fort William to assist him with a body of 1,000 European troops, some sepoys and a few English guns for the Emperor's service,[3] and wrote to Mir Qasim to forward his interest by persuading the Governor to comply with this request. Shah Alam also wrote both to the English Governor and the *Subahdar* of Bengal to the same effect and these letters were received at Calcutta on 5th October, 1762. But not being favourably disposed towards Shuja-ud-daulah whom he believed to have been his enemy from the very beginning, Mir Qasim tried to dissuade Vansittart from complying with the former's request. "As I see", he wrote to the Governor "that

A letter from Lucknow to Mr. Ellis at Patna, received on 1st October, 1762, in I. O. Records, Public Consultations of Bengal, 1762, p. 235.

Colonel Eyre Coote wrote to the Governor in a letter dated at Patna 19th June, 1761 : "It is I believe pretty certain that Shuja-ud-daulah of *himself* is not able to carry the king to Delhi and I am sure His Majesty does not lay so much confidence on his power as on that of the English." (See Bengal Sel. Com. Progs., Vol. II of 1761, p. 244.)

Extract from a letter dated Lucknow, 16th September, 1762, in I. O. Correspondence, 1762, pp. 235-36 ; C. P. C., Vol. I. No. 1622.

Shuja-ud-daulah is not well-disposed towards me, I therefore evade sending him any assistance, nor would I counsel you to send him any, because I am well-acquainted with his real disposition that his heart is full of enmity and ill-will." The authorities at Fort William too were not anxious to send any part of their army to such a long distance from Bengal, and Mir Qasim's advice made them come to a definite decision against doing so. On 29th October, 1762, Vansittart sent a reply to the letters from the Emperor and the Wazir, professing loyalty and attachment and promising to despatch the number of troops desired, but adding at the same time that he would see the Nawab Mir Qasim and transact the business of His Majesty.[1] We know that no troops were sent.

13. Shuja-ud-daulah's Quarrel with Ahmad Khan Bangash

Ever since his return from Patna in June, 1761, Shah Alam had been eagerly looking forward to his journey to Delhi and to the day when he would take his seat on his ancestral throne and receive the homage of his vassals and servants. But the project had to be postponed for more reasons than one. In the first place, the new Wazir Shuja-ud-daulah had engaged himself in the conquest of Bundelkhand—a task that proved to be more formidable and baffling than he had thought it to be. In fact he had only begun the campaign, and the end was still far off, when Ahmad Shah Abdali repeated his invasion of the Punjab, and the Emperor and the Wazir, uncertain regarding the Shah's intentions, decided to defer their march to a more favourable time. But the Afghan monarch was really far from unfriendly to Shah Alam, and true to his old policy of giving a fresh lease of life to the Mughal Empire, though as a dependency of Kabul,

[1] Bengal Pub. Progs. in I. O. Records of 1762, pp. 237-39; C. P. C., Vol. I. Nos. 1615, 1038, 1156, 1181, 1306, 1394 and 1614. Letter from Bengal Sel. Com. to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated Fort William, 14th Feb., 1763, in Bengal Pub. Cons. of 1762-64, p. 104; C. P. C., Vol. I. Nos. 1630, 1631 and 1632.

he endeavoured to get the latter recognised as Emperor by important Indian Powers and confirmed Shuja-ud-daulah's appointment as Wazir. The latter now set to work to make suitable preparations for escorting the Emperor to the capital. He summoned the Indian chiefs of importance to join the party, and requested the English to assist the Emperor with 1,000 European troops and some sepoys. The request met with a ready response from some of the powerful provincial rulers, notably the trans-Ganga Ruhelas, and the Emperor accompanied by the Wazir, his court and troops started some time in January, 1763. Among the chiefs of note in the vicinity almost all except Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad promised to join the imperialists, and the Wazir, who had been hostile to the Bangash Nawab, persuaded Shah Alam to chastise him first and then move on towards Delhi.

Awadh and Farrukhabad had come into existence as semi-independent States towards the end of the first quarter of the 18th century, having been founded by two singularly capable foreign military adventurers, Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk and Muhammad Khan Bangash respectively. These soldiers of fortune had little in common except natural talent and allegiance to one and the same master, the Mughal sovereign at Delhi. The one was a Persian Shia, and the other a Sunni Afghan, and in the natural process of expansion of their domains consequent on the rapid decline of the Empire, they found themselves bitter rivals both at the imperial court and in their own *Subahs* and outside. This political jealousy coupled with their racial and religious differences led to a perpetual antagonism which at times found expression in open hostility and war between the two houses.[1] Shuja-ud-daulah and his contemporary on the *gaddi* of Farrukhabad, namely, Ahmad Khan Bangash, inherited from their respective ancestors their positions, foreign policy and mutual suspicion and enmity.

[1] For an account of the early relations between Awadh and Farrukhabad, see my *First two Nawabs of Awadh*, Chapters XIII, XIV, XV.

A cripple and craven though he was, the Bangash chief had gathered a vast army and given shelter to many an impoverished noble of the decadent court of Delhi, and had, since the accession of Shuja-ud-daulah, been casting longing eyes on Allahabad. Twice did he play a tool in the hands of Imad-ul-mulk, and join hands with the former to cripple the power of the latter. On his part Shuja-ud-daulah had equally been on the look-out for a pretext to humble the Bangash and if possible, to encompass his ruin.

An opportunity was not long in coming. For years Ahmad Khan Bangash had not remitted the tribute due to the imperial treasury,[1] and then taking advantage of the complete Maratha defeat at Panipat he had, early in 1761, possessed himself of a considerable portion of the Doab that lay south of his paternal State and was claimed by Shuja-ud-daulah for the Empire. We are informed by a Persian historian of standard authority, who is in the main supported by the best contemporary writers, that while Shuja-ud-daulah was engaged in the work of subjugation of Bundelkhand, Ahmad Khan overran certain of his (Shuja-ud-daulah's) newly acquired districts, and after the panicky retreat of Himmat Bahadur from before Mahoba, he instigated the chiefs of Bundelkhand to continue to resists the imperialists. He is also said to have endeavoured to form a league with the Ruhela chiefs, like Hafiz Rahmat, Dunde Khan and others, with the object of putting a curb on the rising power of Shuja-ud-daulah, who could not look on with equanimity at the hostile proceedings of his Pathan neighbour, especially at a time when he was anxious to assert the power that his new dignity as the first officer of the Empire had conferred upon him. But the spark that set ablaze the flames of war came from an unexpected quarter. Umrao Giri, the second Naga commander in Shuja-ud-daulah's army, having grown offended with his master, left his dominion bag and baggage, and repaired to Farrukhabad where he took service under Ahmad Khan Bangash. The Nawab-Wazir wrote to

1. Khair-ud-din, 113 ; Ghulam Ali, II. 149 ; M. L., 54.

the Khan, asking him to turn the Gosain out, and closed his letter with the threat that in the event of non-compliance "You will destroy the foundation of friendship and the fire of strife will get inflamed." Ahmad Khan flatly refused to comply with the demand, and answering threat with threat, added that he feared none but God and was prepared to meet him in battle.[1] Stung by this reply, which he considered to be highly insulting, Shuja-ud-daulah resolved to settle the quarrel by an appeal to the sword.

It seems that the Emperor and the Wazir had already begun their march from the vicinity of Allahabad in the direction of Delhi before Shuja-ud-daulah received the reply from Ahmad Khan Bangash. Their decision to chastise the ruler of Farrukhabad did not, however, necessitate any important change in their programme, and the imperialists marched to Musanagar on the Yamuna, 14 miles north-east of Kalpi and then included in the Bangash territory. The town was plundered and an imperial *faujdar* was appointed to take charge of it. Here the party halted for some time, and the Wazir despatched to Farrukhabad Majlis Rai, head clerk of the *Khalsa* office, with an imperial *farman* commanding Ahmad Khan Bangash, upon pain of the royal displeasure, to surrender all the territory that he had brought under his possession since the Maratha defeat in 1761, retain only his ancestral estate[2] enjoyed by his family in the time of his father, and remit the arrears of the past few years' tribute. From this place the imperialists proceeded on to Sikandra, 25 miles north-west of Musangar, plundering and ravaging all the villages on the way, and at the latter town they set up their encampment. Meanwhile, Majlis Rai having reached Farrukhabad, Ahmad Khan assembled his officers and troops and all those impoverished but noble refugees from the Delhi court (such as Nasir Khan, ex-governor of Kabul, the sons of

Khair-ud-din, 113; Ghulam Ali, II, 149; M. L., 54; Imad, 88.
T. M., 223a.

the late Wazir Qamr-ud-din Khan, etc.) who had been subsisting on his bounty, and received the royal *farman* with due honour and ceremony. When it was read out to him, he resolved to fight. He said to Majlis Rai that being a hereditary vassal and servant of the Emperor, he had no idea of disobeying the imperial orders. But as regards Shuja-ud-daulah, he delivered the following message for him : "Disregarding the treaty made by your father with me, which had become the foundation of friendship between us, you have resolved on war and brought His Majesty against me. That is all right. I am coming to avenge myself."[1] With these replies Majlis Rai returned to the imperial camp at Sikandra, and Ahmad Khan became up and doing for meeting the enemy. Promptly did he make his preparations and within a few days 40,000 Afghans assembled under his tribal standard. At the head of these loyal troops he marched to Khudaganj, 16 miles south-east of Farrukhabad and encamped there, keeping himself in readiness for a battle, should the imperialists venture to march to the vicinity of his capital.

By this time Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Dunde Khan and other trans-Ganga Ruhelas had arrived near Sikandra, ostensibly in response to the Wazir's invitation to join him and escort the Emperor to Delhi but really to lend support to the Bangash chief. Coming as they did from the same original stock as Ahmad Khan, their sympathies naturally were with the latter rather than with Shuja-ud-daulah. Najib-ud-daulah, who had similarly been invited, came from Delhi to the imperial camp in Fabruary, 1763. Ahmad Khan Bangash and other Pathans endeavoured hard to win Najib over to their cause, but the latter, remaining true to the political arrangement made the Abdali monarch, preferred to act as a mediator between the two parties. He dilated upon the supreme necessity of avoiding war and of acting together in the imperial interest. In the event of an open struggle, said Najib to Shuja-ud-daulah, the Ruhela

[1] T. M., 223b.

chiefs, one to all, were bound to stand with Ahmad Khan with whom they were united by racial and religious ties. But as far as he (Najib) personally was concerned, he was of course with the Wazir and would stand shoulder to shoulder with him; but he feared that his troops being Afghans would not exert themselves, as they were sure to know that the war was between the Wazir and an Afghan chief, and not one between the Emperor and a rebel. Hence the issue of the contest was bound to be uncertain. He promised to coerce the Bangash chief to submission, if the Nawab-Wazir were pleased to approve of his proposal. Then Najib repaired to the camp of his father-in-law Dunde Khan who was the most staunch supporter of Ahmad Khan Bangash and convinced him of the expediency of cultivating friendly relations with Shuja-ud-daulah who was now the Wazir and right-hand man of the reigning Emperor. No Afghan, he said, should be ungrateful to the new prime minister, who had willingly rushed to their rescue and support, when he and most of the Indian Pathans had been besieged at Shukartal and their families had been threatened with sure destruction. Moreover, the Wazir had now been confirmed in the office by the Shah of Kabul in compliance with whose wishes he was making arrangements to end the confusion at Delhi—a measure well calculated to further the interests of the Empire and also those of the princes and chiefs in the country. These arguments received an additional weight by the arrival of Ahmad Shah Abdali's letters to all Indian chiefs, including the Bangash and the Ruhela Nawabs, calling upon them to recognise Shah Alam as their sovereign, show him proper allegiance and escort him to the imperial capital. Hence Najib-ud-daulah's mission was crowned with success. Ahmad Khan Bangash released Salar Jang (brother-in-law of the Wazir) whom he had made a captive during one of the latter's visits to the Afghan camp on the business of negotiating peace. Umrao Giri was banished from Farrukhabad, and with all his followers he took his way towards Agra. The Bangash chief submitted to the Emperor and promised to pay tribute regularly. He was excused from personal attend-

ance owing to his being a cripple and suffering from prolonged illness, and was permitted to enjoy the territory then in his possession.[1]

The dispute, though peacefully settled through the intervention of Najib, left some bitterness behind and the relations between Shuja-ud-daulah and the Afghans did not improve. The Emperor and the Wazir remained encamped at Sikandra sometime longer, discussing futile scheme after scheme of their intended march to Delhi, but they had not the strength or the firmness of will to follow any. Fresh dissensions revealed themselves with the passage of time. Ahmad Khan did not come to pay them even a customary visit, and the Ruhelas displayed an utter indifference to the imperial project of a march to the capital. Najib fell seriously ill, and to crown their difficulties the religious differences between the Qizilbash troops of the Wazir who were *Shias* and Najib's Afghans who were staunch *Sunnis* led to a serious rioting in which an Afghan *pirzadah* (religious preceptor) was killed. The temporary coalition of the most important Muslim chiefs formed with the object of installing the Emperor on his ancestral throne thus broke up in despair. Hence Najib-ud-daulah, who was still ill, took leave of the Emperor on 16th May, 1763 (3rd Ziqada, 1176 H.) and returned to his estate. The Ruhelas, who had not offered a whole-hearted co-operation, now followed suit, and the Emperor and Shuja-ud-daulah were also obliged to retrace their steps back towards Shivrajpur, 20 miles north-west of Kanpur, to spend the fast approaching rainy season there.[2]

Ghulam Ali, II, 152-63 ; M. L., 54-57 ; Khair-ud-din, 113-15 ; T. M., 223a-224a ; Imad, 90-91 ; Ahwal, 206a ; Mirat, 254a.

Ghulam Ali, II, 165-67 ; M. L., 59-60 ; Abdul Karim, 115-16; Delhi Chronicle, 196 ; Nur-ud-din, 59-60.

chapter Seven

A Challenge to the Nascent British-Indian Empire

1. Mir Qasim seeks Shuja-ud-daulah's Help

While Shah Alam and Shuja-ud-daulah were devising futile plans for rejuvenating the Empire and attempting to despoil the Chief of Farrukhabad during the early months of 1763, events in Bengal were heading towards a deadlock between Mir Qasim and the English. The inland trade dispute between that ruler and the latter, developed into a most disastrous war and led to far-reaching consequences of all-India importance. After a gallant resistance his troops were successively beaten at Katwa and Gheria, Sooty and Udanala, and he was finally hunted out of his dominion by the victorious troops of the Company and forced to retreat bag and baggage towards the eastern frontier of Allahabad. A month or two before his final overthrow he had despatched an envoy, Mirza Shams-ud-din, to the court of Shuja-ud-daulah begging his assistance against the English who had first made and then unmade him "Nawab". As this war was being fought out in close proximity to his own territory, Shuja-ud-daulah, together with the titular Emperor, was then encamped near the town of Allahabad so as to be in touch with the course of the struggle and take effective measures to prevent its flames from spreading into his dominion. Here Shams-ud-din sought an interview with the Nawab-Wazir and opened negotiations through Salar Jang, who was prevailed upon to

espouse Mir Qasim's cause in right earnest. The Mirza made a present of 17 lakhs of rupees to the Wazir and 10 lakhs to the Emperor, and offered on doubt a pretty good sum to Salar Jang too, and returned with letters from them containing sentiments of sympathy and friendliness and promising in general terms support against his enemies. The ex-Nawab's chamberlain, Mir Sulaiman, a sycophant of the first water, who had managed to misappropriate some of his master's valuable jewels and some other precious articles during their transit to and from Rohtas fort, also repaired to the Wazir's court and secured letters from the latter to the same effect. Thus assured of Shuja-ud-daulah's friendship, Mir Qasim,[1] who had retreated to the Karamnasa, the boundary of Bihar as well as of Allahabad, on 19th November, 1763, and was there anxiously waiting for a favourable answer, now crossed the river and entered into the Wazir's dominion, ready to proceed to the latter's camp with all his property and effects.

2. Why Mir Qasim sought Shuja's Aid ?

Never before his disastrous defeat and expulsion had Mir Qasim been at all friendly to Shuja-ud-daulah. Within a few months of his accession the former had accused the latter of "being extremely deceitful," and thereafter he consistently complained of the Wazir's unfriendly sentiments towards him. Proud and sensitive to a degree, Shuja-ud-daulah looked upon this new *Subahdar* of Bengal as a mere upstart, and Mir Qasim resented it and complained to Shah Alam that the Wazir wrote to him "threatening letters". In October, 1762, he advised Vansittart to refuse the loan of a contingent of European troops for which Shuja-ud-daulah had requested and informed the Governor that the Wazir had given protection to the expelled zamindars of Bhojpur, who harassed his territory and compelled him to maintain an additional force of ten to fifteen hundred troops. The Wazir "is not well-disposed towards me", he added, ". . . I

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[1] C. P. C., I, 1927, 1962, 1967, 1985 ; Sair, II, 744.

am well-acquainted with his real disposition that his heart is full of enmity and ill-will."[1]

Such being the record of the relations between them, Mir Qasim could hardly expect real sympathy, much less active military assistance,[2] from Shuja-ud-daulah. In fact he was

C. P. C., I, 1038, 1156, 1181, 1306, 1364, 1394, 1614; Qasim to Governor (received on 5th October, 1762,) I. O. Cons. of 1762, pp. 238-39.

Dr. Nand Lal Chatterji (vide Mir Qasim, Nawab of Bengal, p. 255) says that "Mir Qasim had *long been looking for an alliance* with the Wazir and the Emperor." This theory is not borne out by actual facts. Dr. Chatterji gives two specific instances of Qasim's alleged eagerness to befriend the Wazir. (1) Referring to his success against the Bhojpur zamindars in January, 1762, Dr. Chatterji says, "It was on this occasion that the Nawab sought to win the goodwill and, if possible, alliance of his powerful neighbour, the Wazir. The exact motives which actuated him cannot be ascertained." (Ibid, p. 89); and (2) "He (Qasim) had scarcely come back to Monghyr (from Bettia in February, 1763) when he sent an intermediary to the Emperor, and to the Wazir of Awadh in order to seek their alliance against the English." (Ibid, p. 221). As regards the first, it is quite clear from subsequent events that Mir Qasim had no idea of entering into an alliance with the Wazir. He wanted to secure the surrender of Bhojpur zamindars who had taken shelter in Shuja's country, and hence his presence on the frontier and his correspondence. It is a notorious fact that Qasim could not succeed even in this, (See his letter to Governor received on 5th October, 1762) and ill-will between him and Shuja continued. As for the second, it is well to remember that Dr. Chatterji's opinion is based on the *Sair* only. Khulasat of Kalyan Singh is no authority. Those who have read the two works in the original know that Kalyan borrowed almost everything, except transactions in which he or his father were concerned, from the Sair. Moreover, Sair's version in question is not supported by any letter or document in English even. But even if it be correct, the envoy could not have been sent before February or March, 1763, when the trade dispute with the English had reached almost its climax and hence Dr. Chatterji's statement that Qasim "had long been looking for an alliance" with Shuja is hardly correct.

warned by Mirza Najaf Khan against the consequences of his marching to Awadh and entering into an alliance[1] with the Wazir who was known to be ambitious and unscrupulous. But he had no other choice before him. Dr. Nandlal Chatterji uncritically accepts the view that Mir Qasim had the intention of going to seek the aid of the Marathas, the Ruhelas and the Jats.[2] But a careful study of the history of the country as a whole during this epoch reveals the improbability of such a course. It should be remembered that Qasim himself had already rejected the very idea of either marching to the Deccan or seeking alliance[3] with the Marathas. And it is very unlikely indeed that the latter could have afforded him any assistance against the English in view of the internal troubles at Poona and their recent shock at Panipat from which they were recovering only slowly. The Ruhelas had fallen on evil days. They were no longer a powerful united community and had dwindled into petty chieftains, none of whom, not even Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the ablest among them, was strong enough to restore Mir Qasim to his *subahdari*. Nor was it possible for them to give the latter their united support for the simple reason that they were incapable of uniting together even in the defence of their common fatherland (vide Ruhela War of 1774 A. D.). The Jats under their chief Surajmal were preparing for a fatal struggle with Najib-ud-daulah in November-December,[4] 1763, and they could not spare even their smallest corps for Mir Qasim. Above all, these powers were supremely interested in the politics of Northern and Central Hindustan and cared little for affairs in distant Bengal, while Shuja-ud-daulah being its nearest neighbour, took a keen interest in its political upheavals, and, being Wazir, he could with some show of reason take up the cause of Mir Qasim (who had been formally invested with the subahdari of the three eastern provinces by Shah Alam

Sair, II, 742 ; T. M., 241a ; Kalyan, 119a.
Chatterji, *Mir Qasim*, pp. 254-55.
Sair, III, 742-43 ; Kalyan, 119a ; T. M., 241a.
Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. II, pp. 450-53.

early in 1761) on behalf of the Empire, which, in spite of its decay, still commanded great moral prestige throughout the country.[1] Hence, when Mir Qasim saw that the issue of his contest with the English was going against him, he resolved to seek Shuja-ud-daulah's support, and despatched Mirza Shams-ud-din to negotiate terms of an alliance with the latter.

3. Shuja offers the English Help against Mir Qasim

Shah Alam and Shuja-ud-daulah were in cantonments at Shivrajpur when the news of the outbreak of the war in Bengal reached them there. Desirous of fishing in the troubled waters of the eastern provinces, he hastened with Shah Alam to Allahabad in the height of the rainy reason, so as to be immediately in touch with the scene of bloodshed and get reliable information of the course of the revolution in Bengal. In August, 1763, he wrote to Mir Jafar, Vansittart and Ellis, expressing his concern at the distress through which Bengal was passing, informing them of his arrival at Allahabad and readiness to proceed to Bihar to assist them against Mir Qasim, and requested Mir Jafar to issue a formal invitation so that his (Shuja's) advance to Bihar might not be misunderstood. Rightly concluding (27th August) that the Wazir's object was nothing short of meddling in the affairs of Bengal and turning that crisis in its history to his personal advantage, the Calcutta authorities resolved to take immediate steps for the defence of Bihar and requested Mir Jafar to despatch a powerful force to the bank of the Karamnasa to prevent the Wazir from entering the province, and replied to Shuja-ud-daulah that the English did not stand in need of assistance and were powerful enough to punish Mir Qasim. They only requested that the zamindars of Banaras and Ghazi-

[1] As late as 1818, when Lord Hastings instigated the Nizam of Hydrabad and the Wazir of Awadh to set themselves up as independent kings in opposition to the Mughal Emperor, the Nizam refused to do so, on the ground that there could be only one king in the country, namely the Mughal Emperor.

pur might be directed to seize the enemy, if he fled through their territory.[1]

The diplomatic correspondence continued unabated, Shuja-ud-daulah repeating his offer of help and he and his partisans informing the English that the Awadh troops had been posted at the ferries on the Ganga to prevent mercenaries from marching over to reinforce the ex-Nawab, and that arrangements had been made to give all possible relief to a few English refugees who had fled, after their reverse at Patna, in the direction of Ghazipur. The English suspicion was now deepened and on 12th October Vansittart replied that Mir Qasim having been beaten had fled towards Patna, and that the English "will be able to repel whatever invaders may attempt to disturb the tranquillity of these provinces."[2]

4. Shitab Rai's Exertions in behalf of the English

Meanwhile, (about the end of October, 1763) Mir Qasim's agent arrived at the Wazir's court and made a serious endeavour by diplomacy and bribes to win over the latter to the fugitive Nawab's cause, and Shuja-ud-daulah, as is quite clear from his movements, became more seriously interested in the struggle. Seeing this, Shitab Rai, a great well-wisher of the English, decided to exert himself to counteract the machinations of Mir Qasim's agent. He had once been diwan of Bihar, but had recently migrated to Awadh owing to the vindictive hostility of Mir Qasim, taken service under Shuja-ud-daulah and acquired great influence with the minister Beni Bahadur. He opened negotiations with Beni Bahadur for the recognition of Mir Jafar as Nawab of Bengal, and advised the English to apply formally to the Emperor and the Wazir for the issue of a *sanad* of the *subahdari* of the three provinces in the name of Mir Qasim's supplanter. But as he wrote to Major Adams, "bare words on the one side and lakhs of rupees on the other" his task was by no means an easy one.[3]

1 C. P. C., I, 1850-1853 and 1855.
2 Ben. Pub. Cons., July to Dec. 1765, pp. 1195-2000; C.P.C., I, 1897-98, 1901-2.
3 C. P. C., Vol. I, 1922, 1927.

Shuja-ud-daulah's main grievance against the Calcutta authorities was their indifference towards the imperial court, and the Wazir felt that notwithstanding the important character of the war, they had kept him as Wazir entirely ignorant of it. But when Major Adams, on the suggestion of Shitab Rai, sent a written request to the Wazir for the recognition of Mir Jafar, he entertained the petition and demanded the arrears of tribute, the Emperor's *peshkash* and the Wazir's *nazranah* in ready money and recognition of the customary jagirs in the three provinces. Negotiations now proceeded in a slow and leisurely manner, the English expressing their inablility to remit the revenue due as also the *peshkash* on the plea that Mir Qasim had carried away all the treasure and money in the English factories and that Mir Jafar had fallen deeply into debt.[1]

Believing that nothing would quickly be settled by mere correspondence, Shitab Rai instructed (about the middle of November, 1763) his trusted Diwan Sadhu Ram at Patna to see Mir Jafar and Adams with the object of acquainting them with the situation at the imperial court and securing from them proper representation to the Emperor and the Wazir. He urged the Major and the Nawab to deliver to Sadhu Ram the petitions and letters to the Emperor and the Wazir, as the issue of the *sanads* would lead to two important results : firstly, the King and Shuja-ud-daulah would give up the idea of helping Mir Qasim, and secondly, the ex-Nawab thus formally dismissed would lose all credit in the country and none would come to his support. Father Windel, the Lucknow Padre, advised Major Adams nearly the same course, as the Wazir was not likely to espouse the cause of Mir Qasim, and if he permitted the fugitive to seek refuge with him, he would soon strip him of his wealth and then drive him out—a prophesy that was fulfilled literally in due course.[2] The Calcutta authorities agreed to follow the advice.

C. P. C., I, 1960-61. 1964-72, 1974-86.
C. P. C., I, 1962, 1978.

By this time Mir Qasim who had received assurances of his safety and assistance from Shuja-ud-daulah, crossed the Karamnasa and reached the vicinity of Banaras *en-route* for the imperial camp. Informed of these developments, Vansittart sent another representation to Shah Alam, praying that Mir Qasim be either meted out due punishment or delivered into the hands of the English. As for the arrears of tribute, he requested that they might be realised from the ex-Nawab who had carried away all the wealth of the provinces. The court made an attempt to assure the governor that no mischief was intended by permitting Mir Qasim to come to the imperial camp, and that that politic step was taken with the object of preventing the fugitive from marching to the Ruhelas or to the Deccan and creating mischief for Bengal with their help. There is reason to believe that the English entertained the hope till the beginning of February, 1764, that Qasim would be robbed of his wealth and then peacefully surrendered to them, and this hope was inspired by letters from the Emperor, the Wazir and certain other members of the court.[1]

5. Beni Bahadur Espouses the Cause of the English

Meanwhile, Sadhu Ram had successfully performed the task entrusted to him by Shitab Rai. Having seen Mir Jafar and the English in their camp near the Karamnasa, he secured from them petitions for the Emperor and the Wazir and *hundis* (letters of credit) of five lakhs[2] of rupees for Shah Alam as fee for the patents of appointment together with the papers appointing Shitab Rai as Diwan of Bihar in perpetuity (*batariq istamrar*) and conferring upon him and his heirs his original jagirs in recognition of the latter's services to the English. With these precious documents Sadhu Ram returned to his master (near Banaras, sometime in December, 1763), and Shitab Rai repaired to the Wazir near Allahabad, to submit them to him. After his arrival there, he was taken ill, and

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1 C. P. C., I, 2000-2, 2005, 2017, 2023 ; Ben. Sec. Com. to Carnac, 2/2/1764, Vide Ben. Sec. Cons., 1764, 27-28.

2 Kalyan gives 6, while Ben. Sec. Com's letter, 2/2/1764, gives 5 lakhs which is more likely to be correct.

therefore sent his son Kalyan Singh (who later on succeeded his father as Maharajah Kalyan Singh, Diwan of Bihar) to present them to Rajah Beni Bahadur. It was afternoon and the Rajah was lying in bed after his meal, and when Kalyan was reported, he called him in, and offering him a seat on the bed opposite his own, asked the cause of his visit at an unusual hour. Kalyan delivered the message. The Rajah thereupon got up immediately, quitted his bed and took up his seat at his *masnad* and then Kalyan placed before him all the letters and petitions, etc. that Sadhu Ram had brought. As Beni Bahadur was an unlettered man, the papers were read out to him word by word and their meaning clearly explained by Kalyan Singh himself. The minister was so dissatisfied with Mir Qasim, whose agents had ignored him altogether and negotiated an alliance through his rival Salar Jang, that he eagerly listened to the English overtures and decided to back up their cause. Although only two to three hours of the day were left, he dressed himself, mounted his elephant and seating Kalyan Singh by his side, set out for the Wazir's tents which were at about a mile's distance from his own.

6. The Final Stage of the Negotiations : Shuja-ud-daulah Misappropriates the Imperial Hundis

When they were announced, Shuja-ud-daulah summoned them in and while Kalyan Singh was bidden to take his seat in an ante-room, the Nawab-Wazir remained closeted with his chief minister for half an hour. As soon as the confidential talk was over, the Rajah, beckoning Kalyan Singh to come, took the letters and petitions from him and submitted them to the Wazir. Shuja-ud-daulah read them all, and taking those meant for him returned the rest to Kalyan. He asked many questions about the English and concluded by desiring to know if they were quite firm in their desire to enter into an agreement and added that if not, he would be highly displeased with Shitab Rai, the mediator between the parties. Kalyan Singh assured him that the English were loyal, and

that they were determined to form an alliance with him. The Wazir seemed evidently satisfied. Happy at the conclusion of the negotiations, they took leave of Shuja-ud-daulah, came out of his tents and prepared to return to their own.

The Rajah set out immediately. But Kalyan Singh was still standing outside, when a man came to enquire if they were gone. He conducted Kalyan Singh in and what followed may be related in the latter's own words: "The Nawab-Wazir was standing in the tent and waiting (for me). As soon as his eye fell on me, he enquired if Maharajah Beni Bahadur had left. I replied that he was gone. Having then advanced near me, he snatched away with his own hand the papers which I had fastened to my belt. He sorted out of them the *hundis* of six (five) lakhs of rupees and put them (*hundis*) in his pocket and said to me, 'I am keeping them with me (literally, taking care of them), and you should get them cashed and hand over the money to me.' I replied that if it was his order, I would furnish the sum then and there. He said, 'I shall take it from you tomorrow. There is no mention of these *hundis* in any of the petitions addressed to the Emperor, save in one from Sadhu Ram. You should submit that petition after having scrapped it (that word) so that at the time of reading (the papers) His Majesty might have no idea of the *hundis*.' I answered that I would act accordingly. But he didn't believe me, and taking out the petition, he scrapped the line in which there was a mention of the *hundis*. Then he took some ink from his ink-stand and rubbed it over the line so that it (petition) was disfigured. I represented that the petition was spoiled. He then said, 'What should now be done?' I replied that I would get it copied out on another sheet of paper and then put it in the envelope. His Excellency approved of it and said, 'That is all right.' And by way of special favour he bestowed upon me a trayful of fruits which consisted of four bunches of Persian grapes, apples, a fine variety of pomegranates (*anar bedanah*), and a good species of Persian musk-melon (*sardah*), and directed an eunuch in attendance to entrust

it to my men outside. I, bowed humbly, took leave and came out."[1]

Kalyan now repaired to Beni Bahadur to relate to him what had passed between him and the Wazir after the minister had left. The Rajah was then engaged in the evening prayers (*pujah*), and being informed of all that had happened, he opined that as the Nawab-Wazir had taken possession of the *hundis*, their mission had been crowned with success. Kalyan therefore returned satisfied to his father's tents.[2]

But the problem was not quite easy of solution, and delicate negotiations were spun out for some time longer with only a qualified success in the end. The English desired not merely the royal recognition of Mir Jafar but also a defensive alliance with Shuja-ud-daulah against Mir Qasim, and their main object was to get the latter punished or delivered into their hands. The Fort William Council had appointed Marriot as an ambassador to the Wazir to negotiate such a treaty, but he was instructed to proceed to the latter's court only after his intention about Mir Qasim had been correctly ascertained. Two other complications were introduced into the negotiations. Anxious to reduce Bundelkhand and humble the pride of Hindupati, Shuja-ud-daulah once again sought the aid of English troops, a request which the Governor and Council would not comply with unless Mir Qasim had been punished or surrendered, while the Nawab-Wazir wanted an immediate compliance. Then he demanded the cession of Bihar as a price for his refraining from taking the side of Mir Qasim, and Shitab Rai had given the *muchalkah* and agreement concerning it, which aroused Mir Jafar's resentment.[3] Hence while the negotiations regarding the recognition of Mir Jafar had reached the last stage and were

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1 Kalyan, 123a-125b. He is substantially supported by the letters in C. P. C., Vol. I.

2 Kalyan, p. 125b.

3 Ben. Sec. Cons., 8th Dec. 1763, pp. 7-9 ; C. P. C., I, 2052, 2063, 2039-40a, 2054.

expected to end in success, those regarding an alliance between the parties had an uphill task before them.

7. Mir Qasim Meets Shuja-ud-daulah

It has already been said that Mir Qasim reached the bank of the Karamnasa on 19th November, 1763. On receipt of assurances of the Wazir's friendship, he crossed the Karamnasa on 5th December, with the remnant of his once grand army, now estimated at about 30,000 troops all told, and marched towards Allahabad. Beni Bahadur received him many miles in advance and by way of Banaras they reached the ferry of Phaphamau (5 miles north of Allahabad) on the Ganga on 3rd January, crossed the river and proceeded to the imperial camp on the Yamuna, south-west of the town of Chail (12 miles west of Allahabad). When the distance between him and the royal camp remained four to six miles, Shuja-ud-daulah marched out at the head of his ten to twelve thousand troops to welcome the guest in advance. Mir Qasim had set up a tastefully decorated, magnificent canopy under which had assembled his principal officers and attendants, all clad in rich gorgeous dresses and his troops lining either side of the road from the doorway of his camp to a distance of one-fifth of a mile. On the Wazir's arrival Mir Qasim walked to the inner door of his camp and the two exchanged greetings and embraced each other, after which the latter conducted the former to the canopy and both seated themselves together on the same *masnad*. Shuja-ud-daulah soothed the feelings of the exiled Nawab by kind and friendly conversation, and arranged for an audience with Shah Alam on the 22nd. Mir Qasim presented to the Wazir 21 trays of various kinds of stuff for robes, 6 elephants and 14 horses, and to the King, besides the usual *nazar* (offerings) he made a present of 14 elephants and 23 state horses. Next day (23rd) the fugitive guest made a return visit to the Awadh ruler. Anxious to outdo the ex-ruler of Bengal in theatrical display of magnificence and military pomp, Shuja-ud-daulah arrayed his Mughal cavalry, dressed in deep scarlet and armed with muskets, from the gate of his richly decorated canopy

to about a mile's distance. Advancing to near the inner gate of his special audience room, he received the august visitor with all courtesy, seated him by his side on the same *masnad* and pleased his heart by sweet friendly talk. After an exchange of civilities, Mir Qasim returned to his camp.[1]

8. Why Shuja-ud-daulah Welcomed Mir Qasim

It has been shown that as early as August, 1763, Shuja-ud-daulah had first opened negotiations with the English and Mir Jafar, repeatedly congratulated them on their victories over Mir Qasim, and offered them assistance in bringing the war to a successful conclusion. For about two months and a half (August-October) he does not appear to have had any correspondence with Mir Qasim ; at least we have no evidence whatever of his duplicity during these months. The Wazir cherished the hope of extracting a handsome amount of money from Mir Jafar and the English not only as arrears of the past few years' tribute due from Bengal and for his recognition of Mir Jafar but also as a price of his neutrality in the war. Then he had his eye on the province of Bihar and hoped that the old Nawab would relinquish it peacefully. But the English consistently refused to pay him or the Emperor anything except the usual fee for the patents of appointment, and both the Calcutta authorities and Mir Jafar were extremely against the cession of any part of their territory.[2] Hence as the negotiations protracted on, Shuja-ud-daulah's hopes of getting money and a share in the kingdom of Bengal gradually fizzled out, leaving him, as might be easily imagined, a little disappointed.

It was at this time that Mir Qasim's envoys, having heavily bribed the courtiers, offered lakhs of rupees to the Emperor and Shuja-ud-daulah, and held out bright prospects of making money. And Shuja-ud-daulah, while retaining diplomatic

C. P. C., I, 1985, 2017, 2039 ; Innes, 174 ; Jennings to Vansittart, 27/1/1764, Ben. Sec. Cons., 1764, 37-39 ; Sair, II. 744-45 ; T. M., 242a ; Khair, 118.

C. P. C., I, 1850-52, 1897, 1900, '64, '73, '85, '93, '95, '99, 2002, '05, 50, '54.

correspondence with the English, now entered into negotiations with Mir Qasim also in the beginning of November, 1763, and became guilty of duplicity. He invited the ex-ruler and afforded him shelter. His main object in doing it seems to have been to use Mir Qasim as a pawn in the game of diplomacy and to compel the English, by the threat of the fugitive Nawab's presence in his camp, to submit to his terms. And, if he succeeded in this, he would be achieving a great diplomatic triumph without having had to fight. But if, on the other hand, the English stubbornly refused to comply with his demands, he would back up Mir Qasim in his pretensions to Bengal and wring from him the same concessions, or even more than what he desired the English and Mir Jafar to concede. It is curious that while it was clear to all who knew the Wazir's character that he would strip the ex-Nawab of his enormous treasure estimated at 8 to 10 krores and borne by 300 elephants which he coveted, Mir Qasim[1] had been so blinded by adversity that he did not even suspect the motives of Shuja-ud-daulah whom he had some time before characterised as "being extremely deceitful."

It is likely that the Wazir feared that Mir Qasim with a vast treasure and powerful force, if left to roam aimlessly might prove a menace to the peace and security of his dominions. But for the reasons already given the opinion of a modern scholar[2]

C.P.C., I, 1927, 1787, 2023; S. P. D., XXXI. 55, 79. Imad, p. 92, gives 385 elephants.

Dr. N. L. Chatterji, *Mir Qasim*, pp. 254-255. The only letter on which Dr. Chatterji relied is a letter from Wazir to Adams (Trans. P. L. R. ; 1763-64. No. 28. pp. 48-50). It says that Qasim had thoughts of going to the Deccan. Shuja with a view to the good of the English invited him and now he had no power of going anywhere else. (See also C.P.C., Vol. I, 2001). As regards Qasim's alleged intention of going to the Ruhelas and the Jats, Dr. Chatterji based his opinion on Shakir-ud-daulah's letter alone. (Trans. P. L. R., 1763-64, No. 40, pp. 64-69). This man was a noble at the imperial court and a partisan of the Wazir and he wrote that Mir Qasim wanted to go to the Ruhelas

continued

that Shuja-ud-daulah welcomed Mir Qasim because among other reasons he wished to prevent the ex-Nawab from entering into an alliance with the Marathas, the Ruhelas and the Jats, does not seem to hold water. He has unfortunately based his conclusion on the letters of Shuja-ud-daulah and his partisans who had naturally been anxious to make the English believe that the Wazir rendered the Company a great service by inviting Qasim to his camp, detaining him and preventing him from going to the above-mentioned powers and seeking their support.

9. The Third Expedition Against Hindupati, February, 1764

Soon after his arrival at the Wazir's camp, Mir Qasim started negotiations for assistance in recovering his lost dominion, and won Shuja-ud-daulah's sympathy by making costly presents to his near relations, such as a rare ornament valued at many lakhs and a chariot drawn by elephants covered with embroidered trappings to Bahu Begam and some costly articles to Sadrunnisa. He urged that the English should not be given time to consolidate their hold in Bengal. But the Nawab-Wazir, burning with a feeling of revenge against Hindupati, who had twice defied his authority, wished to utilise the occasion by sending an expedition for the conquest of Bundelkhand, and hence he stressed the need of the subjugation of the refractory Hindupati taking precedence over a march against the English. In fact the idea of wiping off the disgrace of his Gosain commander's defeat and humbling the pride of the Bundela chief had for months been agitating his mind and he had already nominated Beni Bahadur to undertake the task.[1] Seeing this, Mir Qasim volunteered himself to perform it and Shuja-ud-daulah gladly accepted the offer.

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and the Jats, but the Emperor and Wazir out of their regard for Mir Jafar and the English invited him to court by artful encouragement, etc. etc. (see C. P. C., Vol. I, 2023). The object of both these letters was to convince the English that Shuja was their real friend.

1 Sair, II, 745; Kalyan, 120b; T. M., 242a; C. P. C., I, 1993, 1995, 1999.

Accompanied by Beni Bahadur and taking most of his troops and a part of the Wazir's force, estimated at about 30,000, with his park of artillery, Qasim crossed the Yamuna and entered into Bundelkhand sometime in the beginning of February of 1764. At once did he succeed in making an impression on the enemy whose irregular levies, notwithstanding their bravery, could not long resist his trained and disciplined troops under the command of Samru. Mir Qasim rapidly advanced ahead of Beni Bahadur, and brushing aside opposition, captured a few fortalices. Then he proceeded to besiege the historic fortress of Kalinjar, situated 25. 1 N and 80. 29 E. At this time Najaf Khan, who had fought for Qasim at the battle of Uduanala, parted company with the latter after his decision to march to Awadh and taken service under Hindupati, offered to mediate so as to terminate the struggle and enable the ex-Nawab to begin his campaign against the English as early as possible. He frightened the Bundela Rajah by magnifying the military strength of Mir Qasim, and advised him to come to terms with such a powerful adversary possessing guns and troops served and trained after the Western model. Accordingly, Hindupati submitted, paid a part of the tribute due from him and promised to clear the balance some time after. The siege was now raised, and elated with the results of the campaign, Mir Qasim returned to the imperial camp near Allahabad and deposited the money in the Wazir's treasury, himself standing surety for the balance due from Hindupati.[1]

10. Mir Jafar formally Appointed Subahdar

During Mir Qasim's absence in Bundelkhand the negotiations carried on by Shitab Rai for the formal recognition of Mir Jafar had reached the final stage. The latter having bound himself to pay the annual tribute of 28 lakhs of rupees and a *peshkash* of five lakhs, and executed a bond for the same, Shuja-ud-daulah had the *sanads* prepared and answers to the

[1] Abdul Karim, 119; Sair, II, 746; T. M., 242; Kalyan, 133b-134a; C. P. C., Vol. I, 2065 & 2069; Gentil's Memoires, 235; S. P. D., Vol. XIXX, 52.

petitions from Mir Jafar and the English written, all under the seals of the Emperor and the Wazir, and all these, together with robes of honour for him as well as for the English officers and Mir Jafar, were made over to Kalyan Singh.[1] The Wazir, now summoning Kalyan Singh handed over to him the *hundis* he had taken possession of some time back, with instruction to get them cashed and furnish him with money—a task that he performed without delay.

Having journeyed to Bihar, Kalyan Singh placed these papers safely in the hands of Mir Jafar (at Baksar on 24th March, 1764), who received them with the ceremony to which imperial *farmans* were entitled, and was happy to possess them. He was particularly pleased with Kalyan Singh and bestowed upon him a reward of fifty thousand rupees in cash, besides some valuable articles.[2]

11. The Break of Negotiations with the English; Alliance between Wazir and Mir Qasim

By this time the Bundelkhand expedition had terminated successfully. On his return, Mir Qasim learnt to his surprise and mortification that the Wazir had already recognised Mir Jafar and issued patents of appointment of the *subahdari* in his name. He sought an interview with the Wazir, and with a peculiar nervousness that characterised him in times of trial and difficulties, he took off his turban and placed it on the latter's feet and besought him to abandon the agreement with Mir Jafar and the English. In order to avoid the odium of breaking faith with a refugee, whom he had willingly given shelter, Shuja-ud-daulah picked up the turban, placed it on Mir Qasim's head, embraced him and requested him to stop wailing. He explained away the issue of *sanads* to Mir Jafar as having been done by the Emperor's orders and against his personal wish and assured the ex-Nawab of his desire to help him in his proposed struggle with the English. Mir Qasim even

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1. Ben. Sec. Com. to Carnac, 2nd February, 1764; Kalyan, 126b. Out of 28 lakhs two were annually payable to the Wazir.
2. C. P. C., Vol. I, 2146, 2154, 2129; Kalyan, 127a-130b.

suggested that Shitab Rai, the principal intermediary with the English, should be meted out due punishment for his hostility to him, and the Wazir, anxious to please the ex-Nawab, sent Shitab Rai[1] away to Pratabgarh (in Awadh) for a temporary period.

The thought of a friendly agreement with the English was now entirely given up. Shuja-ud-daulah had no longer any hope of securing a friendly cession of Bihar or acquisition of money from them. Not only had they consistently refused to pay anything, but they had even disapproved of Mir Jafar's conduct for having executed an agreement to pay to the Emperor five lakhs of *nazranah* and an annual tribute of 28 lakhs of rupees. The Wazir therefore pledged his support and assistance to Mir Qasim with the object of imposing upon him the same terms that he was dictating to the English. Beni Bahadur and Shah Alam, opposed as they were to the policy of hostility towards the English, advised him against entering into an alliance with the ex-ruler of Bengal and undertaking the responsibility of fighting with the latter's enemies. But in greed for riches and territory he would not listen to this sound advice, and the disappointed minister (who was medium of negotiations with the English) took umbrage and continued to be sympathetic towards the English,[2] while Shah Alam became utterly indifferent to his Wazir as well as to his war policy and secretly wrote to the Governor that in spite of the

C. P. C., Vol. I, 2098, 2125 ; Kalyan, p. 100b-130a. Kalyan Singh says that Mir Qasim offered ten lakhs of rupees to Shuja, if the latter ordered Shitab Rai to be killed, but the Wazir refused to do it (see Kalyan, p. 31b). This seems to be too much even for Mir Qasim to have proposed.

Ben. Sec. Com. to Carnac, dated 2nd February. 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons., 1764, pp. 27-31 ; G. Ali, II, 171-72 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. of 3rd April, 1764, Vol. II, p. 108 ; Kalyan, 132a ; Sair, II, 745. T. M., (p. 242b) says that the English had agreed to surrender Bihar and pay fifty lakhs of rupees to the Wazir, which is not supported by the contemporary records of the East India Company. G. Ali, II. 173, Mirat, 259b and M. L., 64-66, say that they promised to pay 2 krores.

hostile attitude of the court, he personally was friendly to the English and was firmly resolved to abide by the recent agreement, that is, the recognition of Mir Jafar as the real *subahdar* of the three *subahs*. In another letter he informed Vansittart that he was even willing to part company with Shuja-ud-daulah and march away to Delhi, if the English agreed to defray the expenses of his journey.[1]

Neutrality had hardly any place in Shuja-ud-daulah's mental make-up. Unless he was prevented by circumstances over which he had little control, he would take sides in a quarrel or a controversy that concerned him directly or indirectly. Difficulties from the side of the Emperor and Beni Bahadur did not deter him from pursuing the course he had deliberately chosen, and the terms of an alliance between him and Mir Qasim were quickly settled. The latter bound himself to defray the expenses of the Wazir's army at the rate of eleven lakhs of rupees per month from the day he crossed the Karamnasa, and to cede to him the province of Bihar (with whatever sum there was then in its treasury), after he had been restored to the *masnad* of Bengal. He is said to have also agreed to pay to the Wazir a sum of three[2] *krores* of rupees on the successful conclusion of the expedition. Preparations were now begun in right earnest, and yet there was no formal declaration of war ; nor was diplomatic correspondence with the English stopped. Early in March, 1764, the allies with the unwilling Emperor and a large force left the bank of the Yamuna, and reached the confines of Banaras on the 17th, where a bridge of boats began to be thrown on the Ganga. These proceedings could not long remain con-

C. P. C., Vol. I, 2134, 2135 ; the Emperor's letter in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 3rd April, 1764.

Sair, II, 746 ; Kalyan, 134b ; T. M., 242b. Imad, p. 93 says that Qasim agreed to pay one lakh per day when the army was on the march and fifty thousand per day while it was in camp. This seems to be an exaggeration. Khair-ud-din, p. 119 gives 15 lakhs per month. I prefer the figures given by the Sair, the author of which was at that time in Banaras and must have known the truth.

cealed from the English, and Vansittart (30th) reminded Shuja-ud-daulah of his promise to punish Mir Qasim, informed him of the reports he had received of his march towards Bengal and warned him against commencing hostilities in the event of which the English were determined to carry war into his dominion.[1] This straight and unequivocal letter, sounding as it did like an ultimatum, went home, and Shuja-ud-daulah, always proud and sensitive, abandoned the policy of secrecy and issued a clear and emphatic challenge, directing them to deliver all the territory in their possession, cease to interfere with the government of the country and revert and confine themselves to their original profession of trade or take the consequences of a war. The challenge reached Calcutta on 25th April, 1764, and is well worth reproducing in its English translation :—

Shuja's Letter to the President and Council, Calcutta

"Former Kings of Indostan, by exempting the English Company from duties, granting them different settlements and factories and assisting them in all their affairs, bestowed greater kindness and honour upon them than either upon the country merchants or any other Europeans ; moreover, of late His Majesty has graciously conferred on you higher titles and dignities than was proper, and Jagirs and other favours. Since notwithstanding these various favours which have been shewn, you have interfered with the King's country, possessed yourself of districts belonging to the Government, such as Burdwan and Chittagong, etc., and turned out and established Nabobs at pleasure without the consent of the Imperial court, since you have imprisoned dependents upon the court and exposed the Government of the King of Kings to contempt and dishonour, and since you have ruined the trade of the

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1 C. P. C., Vol. I, 2130, 2131, 2136 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. of 29th March, 1765, II, 99-100; Tabsir, 630. T. M., (p. 142b) says that he set out on 15th Muharram (18th March, 1764). But the latter date cannot be correct, for Carnac in his letter of 15th March says that he was on the march on that date.

merchants of the country, granted protection to the King's servants, injured the revenue of the Imperial Court, and crushed the inhabitants by your acts of violence and oppression, and since you are continually sending fresh people from Calcutta and invading different parts of the royal dominions, and have even plundered several villages and pergunnas belonging to the province of Allahabad, to what can all these proceedings be attributed but to an absolute disregard of the Court and wicked design of seizing the country for yourselves. If you have behaved in this manner in consequence of your King's commands or of the Company's directions, be pleased to acquaint me of the particulars thereof that I shew now a suitable resentment. But if these disturbances have arisen from your own improper desires, desist from such behaviour in future, interfere not in the affairs of Government, withdraw your people from every part and send them to their own country, carry on the Company's trade as formerly and confine yourselves to commercial affairs. In this case the Imperial Court will more than ever assist you in your business and confer its favours upon you. Send hither some person of distinction as your *vaqueel* to inform me properly of all circumstances that I may act accordingly, and if (which God forbid) you are haughty and disobedient, the heads of the disturbers shall be devoured by the sword of justice and you will feel the weight of His Majesty's displeasure which is the type of the wrath of God. Nor will any submission or acknowledgment of neglect hereafter avail you, As your Company has of old been supported by the royal favours, I have therefore wrote to you. You may act as you may think advisable. Speedily send me your answer."[1]

11. Shuja's Letter to Carnac

"Agreeably to His Majesty's care for the welfare of the people I now write to you, consider how the Kings of Indostan have given your Company settlements and factories, exempted them from duties, and conferred greater favours upon them than other Europeans or the merchants of their own dominions.

[1] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 1764, pp. 132-34.

Since then, notwithstanding all those favours, you have been guilty of ingratitude to the Court, since you have turned aside from your former paths and on the contrary have been continually marching your troops into the King's country and since you have presumed to remove the officers of the Imperial Court and to turn out and establish Nabobs, what kind of behaviour is this? In case you have your King's or your Company's orders for these proceedings, be pleased to inform me of it that I may shew a suitable resentment, but if it is through your own inclinations that you have plundered villages belonging to Allahabad and that you entertain your evil designs notwithstanding the approach of the Royal standards, it is proper you should desist from such proceedings and represent your desires to me. In case of your obedience our favours shall be conferred upon you, otherwise the guilty and disobedient shall be utterly destroyed."[1]

These letters were placed before the Secret Committee, which resolved on war and sent the following reply (26th) to Shuja-ud-daulah, addressing him as *Subahdar* of Awadh and not as Wazir of the Empire :—

"The English have been always faithfully attached to the Kings of Indostan and sensible of the favours they have bestowed on them, and they were moreover the first to acknowledge the present King Shah Alam, who on his part has frequently expressed a dependence on the English above all others, and might have benefited by their assistance, had he not unfortunately fallen into your hands. Instead of asserting the King's rights when you received him from us and proceeding to put him in possession of his capital, you have detained him ever since in a kind of slavery and made use of his name to carry on your own ambitious and unjust designs on the rights of others. We have still the strongest proof of the King's affection and regard for us, and that it is entirely contrary to his inclinations and without his authority that you are advancing towards these provinces. With respect to what you write that we have interfered in the King's country

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[1] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 1764, pp. 134-35.

and turned out and established Nabobs at pleasure without the consent of the Imperial Court, you yourself in a former letter express the highest approbation and applause of our deposing Meer Cossim and supporting the Nabob Meer Jaffier, and as a proof of the King's approbation of our conduct he has graciously confirmed the said Nabob by his Imperial sunnads in the Subahdarry. In the same letter you revile Meer Cossim for his tyrannies and oppression and meanly sue for our assistance against him; now that forgetting your former declaration you join with a tyrant and oppressor against us—in what light can we regard you but as an abettor and partner in his murders and oppressions, since your conduct has proved so inconsistent and unworthy of the rank you hold, and notwithstanding the warning we have given you, you still persist in your designs upon these provinces, we are resolved for the future to answer your threats only by the force of our arms. Nor shall we desist until we have amply revenged ourselves of the injuries which you have done us and given the world this fresh proof that as the English will never injure others so shall none dare to attack them with impunity.

"This will not only be a justice to ourselves, but by the blessing of God will be a means of rescuing the King from the bondage in which you have impiously detained him, and putting it in his power to resume the power of his ancestors."[1]

After this correspondence all thoughts of an amicable settlement of the questions at issue were finally given up, and both the sides kept themselves in readiness for a trial of strength in the field.

12. The English after Mir Qasim's Flight

During the interval between the flight of Mir Qasim (November, 1763) and the formal declaration of war consequent on Shuja-ud-daulah's bold challenge (April, 1764), the English had not been lying in idle or fancied security. One contingent

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[1] Governor's letter to Shuja-ud-daulah dated Fort William 26th April, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 26th April, 1764, pp. 136-37.

of the English troops had already chased the ex-Nawab out of Bihar, and taken up its position near the bank of the Karamnasa, watching the movements of the enemy and keeping themselves in touch with the Court. Although not quite sanguine about the Wazir's delivering up Mir Qasim, the English did at least entertain the hope that he might strip the fugitive chief of his wealth and reduce him to impotence.[1] But if, on the contrary, the ruler of Awadh allied himself with the ex-Nawab, they were determined to fight the quarrel out to the bitter end. On 2nd February, 1764, Major Carnac was instructed to hasten to the Karamnasa to prevent the enemy from crossing the river, if he concluded an alliance with Shuja-ud-daulah, and accordingly Captain Jennings' regiment was quartered near the river. While the Captain was thus keeping an eye on the enemy's movement, there broke out a dangerous mutiny among his European troops. Their salaries having for long fallen into arrears, some 300 troops resigned and marched away towards Banaras. Most of the English mutineers were, however, persuaded to return ; but one or two and about a hundred Frenchmen, all under the leadership of Madec, refusing to listen, continued their journey westward and took service under Shuja-ud-daulah. The Governor, therefore, wrote to the Emperor, Shuja-ud-daulah and Balwant Singh, demanding the surrender of the deserters and, in case of refusal, threatening to give protection to all deserters from their dominions. But the threat did not prove of any avail, for the French troops continued to remain in the Wazir's service. And the English suspected, though without any positive proof, that Shuja-ud-daulah had incited them to rebellion and mutiny.[2]

Meanwhile the reports of an alliance between the Wazir and Mir Qasim reached Calcutta, and the Fort William

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1 Ben. Sec. Com. to Carnac, 2nd February, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons., 1764, pp. 27-31.

2 Jennings to Governor, 12th, 20th, and 24th February, 1764; Madec, 30-1 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. (1764), Vol. II. p. 65 ; C. P. C., Vol. I. 2093 and 2094.

authorities began concerting measures *for the defence of their provinces* as well as for *sowing the seed of discord among Shuja-ud-daulah's vassals and allies.* The principal object of their policy of defence was not to give the allies the chance of entering Bihar but to keep their *subahs* free from disturbance and to launch an offensive against the Wazir in the latter's territory before he could have time to advance to the Karamnasa. In pursuance of this policy Carnac was directed (12th March) to cross the Karamnasa and carry war into Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion, if the news of his alliance with Qasim were true, and Mir Jafar was requested to send a sufficient supply of grain and other things from Purnia, Dinajpur and other districts without delay.[1] On 15th March, Carnac learnt that the Wazir and his allies were on their march towards Bengal, and therefore he also advanced towards the Karamnasa with the double purpose of protecting the frontier and of pushing through the negotiations (which he had opened sometime before) with Balwant Singh so as to separate him from Shuja-ud-daulah and win his active aid or neutrality by engaging to protect the Rajah and help to maintain his independenee of Awadh then and in future. The Bengal Government approved of the measure and recommended it in these words : ". . . . we think it our duty to form against him (Shuja) all the enemies we possibly can, that the proposed alliance with Balwant Singh will therefore be a very proper measure and prove as well now as in all time to come a strong barrier and defence to the Bengal province."[2] There was no longer room for doubt about Shuja-ud-daulah's intentions, and therefore on 30th March, Vansittart warned him that the English would carry war into Awadh, if he set his foot on the soil of Bihar. Urgent letters were now sent to the Chiefs of Chittagong, Dacca and other districts, directing them to send

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1 Ben. Sec. Cons. of 12th March, 1764, in Vol. II. pp, 80-81 ; C. P. C., Vol. I. 2099-2114.

2 Carnac to Governor, 15th March, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 26th March (1764) Vol. II. p. 89 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. of 29th March. 1764. Vol. II. p. 97.

troops to Calcutta at once, as war was imminent.[1] Just after this the Wazir threw down his bold challenge, as we have seen, and war was formally declared.

13. Shuja's Army and Plan of War

Mir Qasim and Beni Bahadur who formed the advance-guard of the allied forces, arrived at Banaras on 20th March, and the Wazir and the Emperor soon joining them there, the whole of the army crossed the river on the 26th. Here on the eastern (right) bank of the Ganga they remained encamped for many a day, waiting for the arrival of Balwant Singh and discussing the plan of action to be followed in the campaign. Shuja-ud-daulah had to make his choice between two alternative modes of warfare,—the traditional Indian system of risking everything on the issue of one pitched battle, and the irregular fighting with light mobile cavalry, driving the enemy away by sudden cavalry attacks and by cutting off his supplies of provisions and fodder. Some of the Wazir's well-wishers urged that the English being masters of the science and art of fighting pitched battles, it would be inadvisable to give them time to gather and form themselves in battle array after their own Western fashion, for in that case fifty thousand of his troops would not be able to stand against 1,000 of theirs. The only practical course to be followed, they said, would be to leave the heavy baggage, big guns and the non-combatants on the Awadh side of the Karamnasa, march quickly at the head of a good number of picked fleet horse, fall all of a sudden upon the English under Carnac (who suffered from a serious disadvantage due to lack of cavalry and were terrified by the reports of the Wazir's powers in battle no less than by his near approach, and were retreating towards Patna) and proceed on, fighting irregular battles, establishing a parallel government in the *mahals* of the three provinces for revenue collection and police administration and conciliating the people by strictly forbidding plunder and molestation and injury to the standing crops. In order to ensure the success of the scheme it was further suggested that

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[1] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 29th March, 1764, in Vol. II. pp. 99-100.

simultaneously with the march against Carnac, a powerful division of cavalry under an able commander should be sent across the Ganga via Saran or Arrah to occupy Patna by surprise before the Major could reach there, and steps might be taken to seize all the boats on the Ganga and other rivers in Bihar so as to prevent grain from reaching the garrison at Patna as well as the English army under Carnac. This was a well thought-out scheme, and it only required a few competent and enterprising officers of whom there was no dearth in Shuja-ud-daulah's army to execute it, and considering the consternation with which Carnac was filled and his craven retreat from Baksar to Patna, it might have attained a partial success, namely, the capture of Patna and occupation of the *subah* of Bihar, although the hope of driving the English out of Bengal was an altogether impossible dream. But proud and sensitive to a degree, Shuja-ud-daulah was impatient of advice, and as he had taken part in the Panipat campaign, he considered himself an adept in war and diplomacy, and whenever anybody in his inner council came forward with a proposal, he would remark after the manner of the Durrani monarch, "You may leave the war to my judgment and ability."[1] Thus this wise scheme was rejected, though, as we shall see, he subsequently tried to follow a part of it.

The allies resumed their march on 8th April, crossed the Karamnasa and rapidly marched to Daud Nagar on the Sone. At this place Balwant Singh (who had never before waited in person on Shuja or his late father, so suspicious had he been of their ambitious designs and distrustful of their word of honour) came after Beni Bahadur and Inayat Khan Ruhela had pledged their word of honour for his safety, and joined the Wazir on 23rd April with two to three thousand horse and a few thousand foot. Inayat Khan, son of Hafiz Rahmat, had already arrived with two to three thousand Pathan cavalry. There were some two hundred Frenchmen

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1 Sair, II. 747 ; Tabsir, 630 (for date); C. P. C., Vol. I. 2145.

in the army, about a hundred under the command of M. Madec, and probobly the same number under M. Gentil who had entered the Wazir's service only some days before the former. Add to these Mir Qasim's three brigades, commanded by Samru, Marker and Aratoon, the force of Shuja-ud-daulah and a handful of men serving under the titular Emperor and we have the whole of the allied army. Its total strength is put by the biographer of Madec at 1,50,000 men, cavalry and infantry being almost equal in number and 200 pieces of artillery.[1] Of these 40,000 according[2] to the highest computation, were the combatants, and the rest were non-combatants.

Although we cannot accept Ghulam Hussain Khan's rhetoric without cautious reservations, the allied army, notwithstanding its numerical superiority and the vastness of its artillery, was by no means a powerful instrument of war. Composed as it was of diverse races, such as, Qizilbashes, Turani Mughals, Pathans, Nagas and Hindus of other castes, besides the French, having little regimental discipline or military training (except the French and the troops under Samru) and with nothing to bind the mercenaries together except the person of the Wazir, the army was no better than an armed heterogeneous mob. A moral rot had been going on for years and the weakness of the force was openly demonstrated on more occasions than one. While the Wazir was on his march to Patna, there was a clash between the Nagas and the Pathans, and bloodshed was averted by Shuja-ud-daulah's timely intervention.[3] During their retreat from Patna to Baksar a quarrel ensued between the Mughals and the French troops and the former fell upon the latter and mercilessly

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1 Tabsir, 631 ; Sair, II. 747. T. M. 243a has 2 to 3 hundred thousand horse and the same number of foot. Ghulam Ali of Lucknow, Kalyan Singh and the author of Gulistan-i-Rahmat and several other later writers further exaggerate the number. I follow the Sair, the author of which was present in the Wazir's camp. Gentil, 236 ; Madec, 29.

2 Innes, p. 191. Sir George Forrest estimated it at 30,000 all told (see his *Clive*, Vol. II. p. 343).

3 Akhbar-ul-Sanadid (Urdu) by Najmul Ghani, Vol. I. p. 361.

pillaged the French camp.[1] Although Shuja-ud-daulah was the chief commander of the allied army, there was no complete harmony of interest and purpose between him and his colleagues. The Emperor was at cross purposes with his Wazir and was secretly corresponding with the English who were anxious to foment differences between the two, and had written to Carnac to encourage the King's party in its opposition to Shuja-ud-daulah.[2] In spite of the fact that Mir Qasim's well-being depended upon the success of the expedition, the ex-Nawab did not cheerfully co-operate with the chief commander and take an active part in the campaign, to the great annoyance of Shuja-ud-daulah.[3] Such an army with such leaders was hardly likely to succeed against British talent, discipline and military science.

14. Carnac's Pusillanimous Retreat to Patna

The English force under Carnac was comparatively very small in numerical strength and much inferior in cavalry. The total number of troops in charge of Carnac and Mir Jafar, who were to oppose the allied armies, was estimated at 19,000 in all. They had suffered from the strain and fatigue of more than four months' continuous campaigning against Mir Qasim which had caused a heavy loss of men (massacre of Patna, besides carnage, in fields of battle) and money. On the eve of the struggle there was a dangerous mutiny in consequence of which almost all the French troops had deserted to the enemy. Shuja-ud-daulah was now exerting himself to corrupt, if we may believe the evidence of the English commanders, the Indian sepoys in the Company's force,[4] which was further handicapped for want of sufficient food supplies. And above all, the English General Carnac, who was directed to measure swords with Shuja-ud-daulah, was rather a cautious man and was not possessed of that intrepidity

1 Rene Madec, 31.
2 Ben. Sec. Cons. of 26th April, 1764, vide Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. p. 138.
3 Sair, II. 749 ; T. M., 243b.
4 Innes, p. 191 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. II. 77, 112.

and that habit of acting offensively which had characterised Clive and Watson and assured for them victories against much superior Indian armies. Some of these deficiencies were successfully removed. Sedition was stamped out with a strong hand, discipline was restored and grain and other necessary articles were hurried to the camp with all possible speed.[1] All were more than counterbalanced by the superior military training of the English troops and their Indian sepoys, their better and more scientific weapons, cool courage and discipline, staying power and unexampled solidarity in the face of danger in the field of battle.

Carnac had reached Baksar on 17th March, 1764, and although he had been directed in clear terms by the Governor and Council to cross the Karamnasa, take up the offensive and carry war into the Wazir's territories, he preferred to halt there for news about the movement of the invading army. The disquieting reports (exaggerated they no doubt were) about the vastness of Shuja-ud-daulah's forces and his personal intrepidity and prowess in battle, filled him with alarm. He hesitated to proceed further, and there is no doubt that at this very time he decided to retreat to Patna and stand on defence there. But he concealed his resolution and the fear that had prompted him to come to it, and as a whitewash wrote to the Governor that he was anxious to cross the Karamnasa and obstruct the enemy's work on the Ganga, but Mir Jafar and Champion being against it, he had to give up the idea.[2] On the 26th he informed Vansittart that as he had received different reports about the routes the enemy was thinking of marching by, he considered it better to wait at Baksar and watch their movements. On 4th April, he broke his camp at Baksar and began his retreat towards the Sone, writing to the Governor that scarcity of supplies had obliged

[1] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 12th March, 1764, in Vol. II. pp. 80-81 ; C. P. C., Vol. I, 2099, 2143, 2162.

[2] Ben. Sec. Cons., 12th March, 1764, II. 80-1 ; Sair, II. 748 ; Carnac to Governor, 22-3-1764, Vide Ben. Sec. Cons. II. 101-2.

him to retire towards the river Sone, and that he had received reports that the enemy was halting at Banaras and had no intention of fighing, his chief object being to draw the attention of the English army to that side so as to gain time and send the divisions of his force to get between him (Carnac) and Patna. Obviously the Major was so deeply terror-stricken that he would not halt on the bank of the Sone to oppose the passage of the enemy there, and before Shuja-ud-daulah had moved down from the eastern bank of the Ganga, he was in full retreat (from the bank of the Sone) towards Patna, informing the authorities in Calcutta (on 9th April) of his reasons for the step he had taken[1]

15. Shuja-ud-daulah Advances to Patna

By this time Shuja-ud-daulah was on his march towards the Karamnasa. Leaving the eastern bank of the Ganga on 8th April, he proceeded on to the Sone and crossed it somewhere near Daudnagar, where Balwant joined him on the 23rd. The Wazir's march was accompanied by ruthless oppression, by plunder and sack of the villages for miles together on both sides of his route, and the innocent helpless sufferers, writes Ghulam Husain Khan who was an eye-witness of this inhuman cruelty, prayed for the success of the English who had not oppressed them so much.[2] Shuja-ud-daulah had already "correctly gauged the incapacity of his English rival (Major Carnac) and now made a bold stroke to out-general him..."[3] Before his arrival at the Sone he had despatched two divisions of his army to march rapidly in a south-easterly direction, avoid Carnac by a wide detour and occupy Patna before the latter could hasten to its relief. And now he himself with the

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1 Carnac to Governor, 26th March, 2nd, 4th and 9th April, 1764, Vide Ben. Sec. Cons. of 1764, II. 112-13, 117, 129-30. Shuja crossed the Ganga on 26th March (Tabsir, 630) and Carnac must have heard of it on 30th. But he kept it concealed from the Governor.

2 Sair, II. 748. He is supported by Ghulam Ali, II. 173 and T. M. 243a.

3 Innes, p. 189.

bulk of the allied army, pushed on with all practicable speed, and it seemed quite likely that he would succeed in outmanoeuvering the English commander by reaching and occupying the capital of Bihar by surprise. But as luck would have it, an ordinary incident so baffled the resourceless skill of his advance-guard that it had to turn back towards the Sone. On 22nd April, the two divisions having spied some of Carnac's troops, who were carrying provisions to the English camp, fired upon them and cut off two or three stragglers. Just then Hay's men came up to face them, killed a few and made one of them prisoner, and Shuja's troops, ignorant of the assailing enemy's number, gave up the advance and fell back upon the Wazir's main force.[1] Thus came to a premature end the Wazir's project of a surprise attack on Patna.

Carnac retreated to Patna on 23rd April, and Shuja, following him closely behind, was spied with his whole force at Mahubalipur on the 25th. First the Major took up his position inside the fort, put it in defensive order and directed his troops to man the ramparts. But soon after he changed his mind, placed the city in charge of Mir Jafar's brother, came out and entrenched himself on the bank of the bed of a dry lake between Patna and a small hillock known as Panch-Pahari at the top of which he set up his batteries. Keeping the fort behind his back, Mir Jafar with his army took up his post to the south of Patna "along the outside of the east and part of the south faces of the fort; his left resting on the river Ganga. Carnac's army was placed along the west; its right resting on the river, and its left extending round as far as Mir Jafar's right, which it joined near the centre of the south face" (of the city). The entire line of the encampment of the English and of Mir Jafar was well fortified and was further protected by a deep ditch; the city wall and bastions had heavy long-range guns arranged on them. The town of Patna was thus

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1 Carnac to Governor, 22nd April, 1764 in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 7th May, 1764, vide Vol. II. p. 159; Innes, 189.

fully protected, on the west, south, and east by the troops, and on the north by the river Canga.[1]

Shuja-ud-daulah marched to the town of Maner on the Ganga and then turned to the village of Phulwari, 7 miles west of Patna, and here he set up his encampment. On 28th April, he moved down 2 miles west of Phulwari, spending the next five days in light skirmishes and in studying the enemy's disposition and plan of defence. Soon he learnt that the British Marines were fast advancing from Calcutta to reinforce Carnac and so he detached a strong body of cavalry to cut them off. But fearing that they might give his cavalry the slip and get into Patna, he decided to attack Carnac before the Marines could join him.[2]

16. The Battle of Panch-Pahari, 3rd May, 1764

Leaving his heavy baggage and non-combatants, Shuja-ud-daulah, accompanied by the Emperor and by Mir Qasim with their united forces, left the vicinity of Phulwari in the morning of 3rd May, and advancing by way of Mithapur and Lohanipur arrived within a short distance of the English entrenchment opposite to which and running parallel to it he arrayed his troops in battle order. He appointed some of his principal officers, such as Shuja Quli Khan alias Mian Isa, Shaikh Din Muhammad and Shaikh Ghulam Qadir, with their contingents, to compose his van[3] and take up their position opposite to the Bengal European Regiment on the side of the south-western corner bastion of the Patna city wall, and himself, with Salar Jang, Mirza Ali Khan, Mirza Naim Khan and the Irani and Turani Mughal officers and troops, stood in the centre, facing the centre of Major Carnac's position. Beni Bahadur and Balwant Singh with their divisions were stationed at a little distance to the right of the Wazir and opposed the left

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[1] Carnac to Governor, 25th April, 1764, Ben. Cons. Vol. II. p. 159 ; Innes, 190 ; Williams, 26.

[2] Sair, II. 749 ; Kalyan, 135b ; Khair-ud-din, 124 ; Tabsir, 632 ; Williams, 27. Williams says that Shuja came before Patna on 24th or 25th, which seems wrong.

[3] T. M., 243b.

corner of the Bengal army, while Inayat Khan with two to three thousand Ruhelas and Himmat Bahadur at the head of five to six thousand Nagas, formed the left wing. Further to the right of Beni Bahadur were arrayed the disciplined battalions and artillery of Samru behind whom, at a distance of one mile and a half, stood Mir Qasim with the rest of his force, estimated at five to six thousand horse, and the Emperor and his men were allowed to remain at a safe distance in the rear. They (Mir Qasim's troops) were to oppose Mir Jafar's right wing.

Having thus marshalled his forces, Shuja-ud-daulah advanced slowly but steadily towards the English entrenchments, keeping his artillery in front from one end of the line to the other, and as he neared the garden of Zakir Khan, a general cannonading began from both the sides a little after 8 o'clock, the English firing heavy guns from the city walls and bastions as well as from their entrenchments. The distant artillery duel lasted from the morning to a little before noon, when the Wazir commenced an attack, and pushing forward with the whole of his division, undertook the impossible task of breaking with sheer physical force the formidable fort-like entrenchment of the English, who played a defensive game, firing their European guns from within. A vigorous and warm attack lasted for two hours, but thanks to the English artillery-men, who rained destruction into his ranks, the Wazir had to withdraw with a heavy loss. At this time he sent a messenger to Mir Qasim, requesting him to come and support the charge by attacking the enemy from his side and direct Samru to reinforce the van with his field-artillery. But the ex-ruler of Bengal did not bestir himself; nor did he order Samru to comply with the request. It was the hour of *Zuhar* prayer (about 2 p.m.), and Shuja-ud-daulah now commanded Himmat Bahadur to lead the charge. Five to six thousand stark-naked Naga troops, with their bodies smeared with ashes and their long hair streaming down their shoulders, furiously attacked the English right wing with swords and arrows, attempting bravely but in vain to force their way into the enemy entrenchment.

They were repulsed by the never-failing balls and bullets from the Bengal batteries. Then came the turn of the Ruhelas. Inayat Khan, with his men, together with certain other troops who formed part of the Awadh left wing, pushed on and made several brave charges, but could not reach the trenches of the Bengal army owing to the murderous fire. In another corner of the field Samru with his trained infantry supported by a large body of cavalry charged one portion of the front of the Bengal European Regiment, but being exposed to the double fire could not advance close to the English fortification and lay under cover in a ravine at a small distance from the enemy's position in expectation of renewing the attack at a favourable turn in the tide of the battle.[1]

About three hours of the day now remained, and Shuja-ud-daulah firmly resolving to make a supreme effort, collected his troops and launched such a gallant and sustained assault on the English front, supported by repeated charges, and an attack on the enemy's rear, that for a time he succeeded in creating great confusion in the English army and reviving hopes of his own success. He personally supervised the operations and was slightly wounded. Steadily advancing in the face of volley after volley of balls and bullets, his men bravely forced their way into the English earthworks, captured three of their drummer boys and plundered some of their things. Here, however, they came to a sudden halt, and the hope of success vanished into the air. The story of science and discipline versus physical bravery and numbers was repeated. As usual the old-fashioned Indian guns proved ineffective against the European field pieces and muskets, and with their aid the English soon recovered their ground, and sallying out took up the offensive and rolled back the advancing tide of the Mughal army. Without being dismayed by the spectacle or dispirited by his chief Beni Bahadur's utter inactivity, Shaikh Din Muhammad, a gallant officer attached to the Awadh premier's corps, sallied out with a band of his troopers and

[1] Carnac to Governor, 4th May, 1764, Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. pp. 180-81.

flying desperately at the throat of the enemy became a prey to the latter's guns. His devoted followers turned back, taking the dead body of their brave leader. Although personal intrepidity and optimism were prominent features of Shuja-ud-daulah's character, he was now disheartened about the result of the day of which he had been so sanguine in the morning. His troops had greatly suffered for want of water,[1] and later in the day because of the change in the direction of the westerly winds, which had now become easterly and was blowing[2] strongly into their faces. Hence, about an hour before sunset, he began an orderly retreat to his camp near Phulwari. The Wazir's gallantry during the day had produced such an impression that although the English moved on to the ground vacated by the enemy, Carnac dared not pursue the retreating Awadh army, and Shuja-ud-daulah was able to carry away all the pieces of his artillery, including his heavy guns, to his camp. All his men had fought well during the day; but the Emperor, Mir Qasim, Balwant Singh and Beni Bahadur had remained inert. Their inactivity was, however, not quite responsible for the result.[3]

1 Tabsir, 633.

2 Sair, II. 750 ; Khair-ud-din, 127.

3 We know from Ghulam Husain Khan (Sair, II. 750) who was present in the field that Shuja-ud-daulah retired about an hour before sunset, but Carnac wrote to the Governor in his letter dated camp near Patna 4th May, 1764 (Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. 180-81) that the enemy was repulsed at sunset and because the English troops were "extremely fatigued" "the enemy took the opportunity of dusk to carry off their cannon." The Major no doubt intended to conceal the real cause (which was his own timidity) why he did not pursue the enemy.

For the battle see Sair, II. 749-50 ; Ghulam Ali, II. 175-76 (brief) ; Tabsir (very useful), 632-84 ; M. L., 76 ; Khair-ud-din, 124-27 ; Kalyan, 136a and b ; Haricharan, 459a and b ; T. M., 243a-244a ; Maadan, IV, 238 ; Carnac to Governor, dated camp near Patna, 4th May, 1764, vide Ben. Sec. Cons. of 14th May, 1764, Vol. II. pp. 180-81 ; C. P. C., Vol. I. 2232 ; Williams, 27-28 ; Broome, 460-62 ;

continued

17. Shuja-ud-daulah's Doings after the Battle : Peace Negotiations

After his withdrawal from the field, Shuja-ud-daulah reached his camp near Phulwari an hour or two before midnight, and the Emperor and Mir Qasim soon joined him there. Here he got his wound dressed and spent the next day, 4th May, in full rest. On 5th May he left Phulwari and moved on to the bank of the *Punpun*, a rivulet, south of the Patna fort, and erected batteries opposite to Matiaburj and Jafar Khan's garden. The allied forces remained encamped in this position till the 12th, and on the 13th Madec, Balwant Singh, Sayyid Nur-ul-Hasan Bilgrami and Shaikh Ghulam Qadir advanced their batteries and began firing at Matiaburj with the object of effecting a breach in the city wall, but without any appreciable success. On 21st May, Shuja-ud-daulah again shifted his position and encamped in Jafar Khan's garden east of the city, where he threw up an entrenchment.[1] Thus he invested Patna, and Carnac and Mir Jafar who lay encamped outside with their armies allowed themselves to be entrapped in a sort of ring-fence and durst not take up the offensive and attack the invader or cut their way through by sheer force.

It was Shuja-ud-daulah's routine to make almost a daily round of the city wall and of his own and the English entrenchments on horseback accompanied by a few troopers, with a view to reconnoitring the enemy's position and studying his defensive arrangements. One day, while he was on his usual round, by chance he came across a group of English troops, probably under the command of Carnac himself, and the parties having scowled at each other, began to exchange arrows and bullets. Mir Mahdi Khan, an officer

Innes, 191-92 ; Gentil's Memoires, 237-38 and Rene Madec, 31 (are very brief). Gentil makes Beni Bahadur responsible for the Wazir's failure to capture Patna, for, according to him, the minister (Beni) not only made useless delays but also revealed his master's plan to the enemy. This version is not corroborated by any other source. Tabsir's dates here fall short by one day.

1. Tabsir, 634-35 : Sair, II, 750 : T. M., 244a.

in Mir Qasim's army who had recently deserted his exiled master to join the English, having recognised the Wazir, the Major kept Shuja-ud-daulah busy in a light skirmish and sent one of his troopers to run to his camp and instantly bring a regiment of Europeans. Within a short time a party of English troops was seen advancing with all expedition towards the scene, when a follower of the Wazir having descried them at a distance, pointed them out to his master and galloped to his entrenchment to inform the allies of the imminent danger Shuja-un-daulah was in. Now the Nawab-Wazir realised that he was about to be caught, but without losing his presence of mind or in anyway betraying nervousness, he extricated himself cleverly by slowly retreating backwards till he reached within a safe distance of his own army that was coming to his assistance.[1]

In this way for twenty days after the battle of Panch-Pahari, Shuja-ud-daulah roved round Patna, blockading the fort, the city and the English army by keeping himself and his forces within 3 or 4 miles of the latter's entrenchments and round the city, but not feeling himself sufficiently strong to actively begin a regular siege or make an assault on the English position in accordance with a well thought-out scheme. Carnac acted even more timidly. Despite positive orders of the Calcutta Council who urged him to take up the offensive "as it is beyond doubt that all our successes against the powers of this Empire have been owing to acting offensively and always pushing to the attack..."[2] he allowed himself to be abjectly besieged by an army which, though greatly superior in numerical strength, was certainly much inferior to his own in discipline and organization and was outclassed in weapons. He did not direct his troops, who had been heartened by the little advantage they had secured over Shuja-ud-daulah on 3rd May, to sally out and boldly launch an offensive against the enemy that "was divided against itself."

1 Sair, II. 751 ; Kalyan, 137a and b ; T. M., 244a.
2 Ben. Sec. Com. to Carnac, 9th (10th) May, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. 175-79.

During this period of practical inactivity the parties were exchanging letters and messages, and negotiations were proceeding slowly. The initiative seems to have been taken by Shuja's people, although he was "so proud that he does not declare that he is negotiating directly."[1] The Nawab-Wazir's principle object undoubtedly was to sow the seed of discord between the English and Mir Jafar, win the latter over to his side, if possible, or at least to secure his neutrality and thus weaken the strength of his enemies and wring from them the concessions he ardently desired, viz., the cession of Bihar and an agreement on the part of the English to pay an annual tribute for Bengal. The negotiations were spun out for long ; but there appeared to be little prospect of an amicable adjustment of the issues involved in the quarrel. Shuja-ud-daulah insisted on the cession of Bihar and then alone he would listen to any conditions precedent to peace, while the English demanded the surrender not only of Mir Qasim and Samru but also of the French deserters as the indispensable condition of a peace. Besides, they were firmly determined not to part with a patch of their territory, and told Carnac that "nothing shall be stipulated on our part in return for his (Shuja-ud-daulah's) compliance with our demands."[2]

Shuja-ud-daulah seems to have now despaired of capturing Patna by an assault or a blockade, and of securing the cession of Bihar through diplomacy. So he decided to have recourse to other means to achieve his object. It is clear from his manoeuvres that he desired to draw the English behind him into the open plain away from their advantageous position near the city wall and then fight out his quarrel with them. The negotiations were still going on, when on 23rd May, in the morning, he left the vicinity of Patna, retired about six miles

Carnac to Governor, 1st June, 1764, vide Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. 258.
Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. 212-13, 225-29 ; Ben. Sec. Com. to Carnac, 21st June, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. pp. 279-283. For negotiation's see also C. P. C., Vol. I. 2250-2252, 2257-2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2267.

and encamped near Phulwari. After a few days' halt at that place, he struck camp and with all his force marched away towards Maner, then turned southward, crossed the river Sone at the ferry of Kullore (Koilwar), 7 miles N. E. of Arrah, and entrenched himself at the other bank. Meanwhile, in compliance with the repeated orders Carnac had sent in the first week of June, a detachment of troops under Champion, by an unfrequented and roundabout route with instructions to cross the Karamnasa, march into Ghazipur district and plunder and ravage the Awadh dominions. Learning that Champion had crossed the Dewa and was laying his country waste, Shuja left the bank of the Sone(about 14th or 15th June), and set out towards his eastern frontier.[1] If we may believe Champion's statement, he returned only after he had destroyed more than a thousand villages.[2] As the rains were about to set in and Shuja-ud-daulah was firmly resolved not to give up his campaign, he did not return to Faizabad, but took up his residence in the fort of Baksar to spend the rainy season there.

Biller to Governor, 26th May, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 7th June, 1764, Vol. II. 252-53 ; Tabsir, p. 635 ; Ben Sec. Cons. II. 263-66, 289 ; C.P.C., I. 2302, 2304.

Champion to Vansittart, 20-6-1764, Ben. Sec. Cons. II. 304-307.

chapter Eight

The battle of Baksar, 23rd October, 1764

1. The Wazir at Baksar ; Peace talks continued

The fort of Baksar in which Shuja-ud-daulah took up his residence in the third week of June, 1764, in order to spend the four months of the rainy season there, lies on the right (or southern) bank of the Ganga and is 25 miles due east of the town of Ghazipur. The choice of the place was admirable, it being strategically situated not far from the right angle made by the mighty Ganga and the Thora Nadi which meets the former about one mile and a half south-west of the fort. The Wazir fortified his position by throwing up an entrenchment round his camp and erecting a long mud wall in front of it from the bank of the Ganga to very near that of the Thora.[1] The country to the north, the west and the north-west of Baksar, belonging as it did to Awadh then, as it does even now, not only assured the Wazir of good supplies of provisions and of troops from beyond the Ganga, but also precluded the possibility of an attack from those directions. On the country lying east and south as far as the river Sone, Shuja-ud-daulah maintained a precarious hold. If an invader meditated making a surprise attack on Baksar, he could proceed from

[1] According to the Sair (Vol. II. p. 761), the Wazir's wall extended from the Ganga to the Thora. That does not seem to be correct, for in Champion's plan of the battle (J. B. O. R. S. Vol. XII. p. 16) it falls short of the Thora. It was through the gap between the southern end of the wall and the Thora that Munro wanted to make his surprise attack on the Wazir's rear on 23rd October.

these two directions only; but there too his progress was bound to be suddenly arrested by the presence of a marshy lake, a few square miles in area, full of water during the rainy season and sticky mud in winter, lying two miles or so to the east of the fort. In this strategic place so well protected by Nature, the Wazir with the Emperor and Mir Qasim and their united forces cantoned during the wet season.

Shuja-ud-daulah had already brought the country from the Sone to the Karamnasa, especially the district of Saran and the estate of Bhojpur, under his power and appointed *amils* (revenue officers) and *faujdars* (police officers) for the collection of revenue and maintenance of order. He endeavoured to retain these parts, and stationed some of his troops with a piece of cannon at the ferry of Koilwar to prevent the English from crossing the Sone. He successfully interfered with Mir Jafar's administration in Bihar so that it broke down completely, and the aged Nawab could not realise anything of the *rabi* and *kharif* revenues of 1764. But hereafter the Wazir became lethargic, probably due to his mistaken notion that the English, like the Indian Powers, would not stir up during the rainy season. He sent for his family[1] from Allahabad, and as the monsoon burst upon the land, he forgot that he was encamped in the enemy country and that he had to make preparations for a renewal of the contest. He succumbed to the subtle influence of sensual pleasures, and besides these, the game of dice and a variety of gambling, pigeon-flying and kindred pastimes almost completely absorbed his attention, and he permitted himself to behave as if he had been on a pleasure-trip or a mere hunting excursion in his own dominion.[2] Naturally he paid little attention to the equipment and organisation of his army. Nor did he care to procure the requisite quantity and the right type of ammunition. He

C. P. C., Vol. I. 2300, 2353, 2354, 2402 &c. Batson's letter to Governor, dated 29th June, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 9th July, 1764, II. 338; C. P. C., I. 2270, Sair, II. 761.
Sair, II. 761-62; T. M., 247a.

seldom consulted his ministers and officers, and did not listen to their advice even on important matters of peace and war.

But whenever he emerged from his recreations, Shuja-ud-daulah displayed a marked earnestness for an accommodation with the English, for which purpose he had opened negotiations soon after his failure before Patna and had continued peace talks all through up to this time. But the talk had not progressed satisfactorily, as each party aimed at securing its own object without trying to tackle the issues underlying the contest and arriving at an amicable settlement. To avoid unnecessary delay, Shuja-ud-daulah now recalled Shitab Rai, probably the greatest Indian diplomatist of his time, from Partabgarh (where he had been sent away early in the year to please Mir Qasim) to employ him as a mediator, and pending his arrival requested Shah Alam and Munir-ud-daulah to sound the English and persuade them to submit a petition begging peace, and send an Englishman of distinction to negotiate terms.[1] The Wazir, no doubt, fondly hoped that as the English had seen something of his power and majesty, they would cede Bihar and would not insist on the surrender of Mir Qasim, Samru and the French deserters. But the Calcutta authorities stuck to their original terms (namely, surrender of Mir Qasim, Samru and the French deserters), and as for sending a responsible Englishman for negotiations, they insisted that Munir-ud-daulah should first see Mir Jafar at Patna and agree to remain there as a hostage and then Swinton would be sent to the Imperial court. Evidently, this condition was not complied with and envoys were not exchanged, and a little later Major Carnac wrote to the Wazir, threatening him with revenge if he did not deliver up Mir Qasim and Samru. But Shuja-ud-daulah definitely refused to comply with the demand. Meanwhile Shitab Rai arrived at Baksar, and on 1st July, the Wazir gave him leave to start for

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1 Shitab Rai reached Shuja's camp before 29th June, 1764 (see Batson's letter of 29th June referred to above). C. P. C., Vol. I. 2290-2294.

Patna to confer with Mir Jafar and the English commander, and if necessary, travel to Calcutta and settle terms directly with the Governor and Council. We are informed by Shitab Rai's son that Shuja-ud-daulah instructed the envoy to frighten the English by magnifying his power and to demand the cession of Bihar, an annual tribute of thirty lakhs and a war indemnity of fifty lakhs of rupees—terms characterised by Shitab Rai as highly extravagant and not likely to be endorsed by the other party. However, upon his arrival at Patna, the Rajah held a conference with the old Nawab and Carnac,[1] acquainted them with the Wazir's views and assured them of his willingness to be at peace with the English, but he (Wazir) would not deliver up Mir Qasim. The substance of the conversation and his own opinion thereon were thus reported by the Major to the Calcutta Board : "That he (Wazir) might perhaps for the sake of our friendship be brought to dismiss or even to plunder and imprison Mir Qasim, but rather than deliver him up, he will continue the war...". For this purpose Shuja-ud-daulah, he added, was trying to purchase Ruhela aid and "representing our (English) design as against the Sultanat." It is obvious that the Wazir was anxious to give up hostilities, but the Calcutta Council did not budge an inch and re-affirmed the original conditions[2] at a meeting held on 24th July, 1764.

2. The English after the Wazir's March to Baksar

Ever since the outbreak of hostilities the Calcutta Board had been urging Major Carnac in strong terms to take up the offensive, and when after the battle of Panch-Pahari, Shuja-ud-daulah had invested the English camp, they directed the Major to bring the invader to action, defeat him and pursue the war into his territory. As this plan was not likely to succeed without

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1 Carnac's letter to Governor, dated 1st June, 1764, vide Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. 257-59 ; C. P. C., Vol. I. 2295, 2296, 2299, 2332-49 ; Tabsir, 697 ; Kalyan. p. 140a.

2 Carnac's letter to Governor, dated Patna, 10th July, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 24th July, 1764, Vol. II, 425-27 ; C. P. C., Vol. I, 2351.

the aid of swift cavalry, Carnac was advised to recruit and maintain a sufficient body of reliable Mughal horsemen under the command of English officers and pay them regularly and punctually, which would make them like the Indian sepoys, attached to the English cause, as the Indian rulers as a rule made irregular payments and that too through *Jamadars* who defrauded the troopers of a part of their salaries.[1] But being on the spot and having to deal with a powerful enemy, Carnac knew his difficulties more than anyone else. Obsessed by the thought of Shuja-ud-daulah's strength, he remained quietly in his camp, even after the latter's retreat from Patna, and lent a ready ear to the overtures for peace. The Governor and Council, however, disapproved of his conduct and sent him positive instructions to continue the war even during the rainy season. "We do hereby direct," they wrote, "that he do immediately put the army in motion, leaving the necessary garrisons in Patna and Mungheer and cross the Sone and pursue the enemy as far as the Ganga opposite to Banaras, endeavouring, if possible, to bring them to an action." Carnac was further ordered to occupy the Ghazipur district and make arrangements for the collection of its revenues, but to commit no oppression so as not to alienate the sympathy of the people. "......It may also be observed as a general rule," wrote the Secret Committee, "on all other occasions to prevent any ravages being committed on the country or injuries being done to the inhabitants ; on the contrary,—all manner of encouragement and protection be given them, in order to gain their affection."[2] But although the Committee again and again reiterated these orders, Major Carnac could not carry them out. The Government now directed the suspension of the negotiations and the arrest as spies of all those envoys of Shuja-ud-daulah who came to negotiate on any other basis than the original conditions, namely, the surrender of Mir

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1 Ben. Sec. Com's letter to Carnac, dated 29th May, 1764, Vide Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II, 238-40.

2 Ben. Sec. Com's letter to Carnac, dated 11th June, 1764, vide Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. 260-61.

Qasim, etc. Now Carnac despatched a detachment of his troops under Major Champion to Ghazipur, which obliged the Wazir to march away to Baksar, as we have already seen, and on 23rd June wrote to the Calcutta Board that as they left nothing to his discretion it was no use his remaining in charge of the army.[1] The Board had been much dissatisfied with the Major and now this letter, which according to them contained "expressions very unbecoming and disrespectful towards us (the Board)," obliged them to take action. On 5th July he was asked to explain his conduct, and the same day Major Hector Munro, commanding officer of His Majesty's 89th Regiment, then in the Bombay Presidency, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Bengal army. Carnac was directed to return to Calcutta and bring with him Mir Jafar whose presence in Patna was supposed to hamper the Bengal army's activities. Munro assumed command of the army on the 12th of August and on the 13th he held a meeting of the officers wherein it was decided that the troops would be in a fit condition to begin their march against the enemy on the 15th or 20th of September, 1764.[2]

3. The English endeavour to incite the Wazir's enemies and corrupt his Troops

Simultaneously with their preparations for the renewal of war to drive the invader from the border of Bihar and their negotiations for peace, the English were carrying on diplomatic correspondence with Shuja-ud-daulah's rivals and enemies with a view to forming a powerful confederacy[3] against him. If the scheme of a confederacy could not fructify, they seemed to have at least hoped to succeed in inciting the Wazir's foes to invade his territory and in instigating his troops to desert their master to join the Bengal army. Sometime in July, Major Carnac

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[1] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 14th, 21st and 28th June, 1764, vide pp. 267-70, 279-83, 292-93, 297-99. Carnac's letter, dated Patna 23rd June, 1764, pp. 316-18.

[2] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 5th July, 1764, vide Vol. II. 316-30; Munro's letter to Governor, dated !6th August, pp. 486-87.

[3] C. P. C., Vol. I. 2435 (Governor's letter to Najib).

wrote to Najib-ud-daulah, the supreme dictator at Delhi, charging Shuja-ud-daulah with treachery and proposing that they (Najib and the English) should make a joint attack on the Wazir's dominion, he from the west and the English from the east. The Afghan chief seems to have given a favourable reply. At the same time, the Major invited Mirza Najaf Khan who bore the Wazir an old grudge and was then in the service of the rebellious Hindupati of Bundelkhand, to join him in an attack on Faizabad, and the Mirza expressed his willingness to cast in his lot with the English with all his troops. But the negotiations had not proceeded far when in August, 1764, Munro assumed command of the British army, and he naturally resumed Carnac's policy in the matter. The Governor and Council authorised the new Commander-in-Chief to engage Najaf Khan "either by promising to support his pretensions to a part of Shuja Dowlah's country, if he chooses to make a diversion where he now is, or by allowing him a reasonable monthly subsidy for the support of his troops, if he inclines to come and join our army." In accordance with these instructions Munro sent tempting offers and urged the Mirza to lose no time and make a treacherous attack on Shuja-ud-daulah from both sides. But Najaf did not join the English till after the memorable contest at Baksar had ended in their favour. An attempt was made to detach Rajah Jugal Kishore of Bettia, who seems to have recently given his adhesion to the Wazir's cause, and we know from the subsequent events that it was successful.[1]

Like a shrewd General that he was, Hector Munro further devised means to weaken Shuja-ud-daulah's forces by tampering with their morale before having a trial of strength with him. Through certain notable Muslim partisans of the Company he opened correspondence with the important Mughal officers in the Wazir's army, such as, Muhammad Baqir Khan, Zain-ul-abidin Khan, Muhammad Taqi Khan, Asad Khan and Muhammad Tahir Beg, instigating them to desert Shuja-ud-

C. P. C., Vol. I. 2341-2414. Ben. Sec. Com's letter to Munro, dated 4th Sept., 1764, vide Cons. Vol. II, 509-10.

daulah and enter the Company's service. He even requested them to contrive to capture and deliver Mir Qasim, Samru and forty or fifty European deserters and, if possible, the Wazir also, into his hands, before finally quitting the Awadh army. For this last service (Shuja-ud-daulah's arrest), if and when performed, the Major promised the Mughal leader, Muhammad Baqir Khan, the governorship of one of the Wazir's two provinces.[1] The Mughal officers, who commanded five to six thousand troops of their own community, had been dissatisfied with the Wazir for certain reasons, and being foreign mercenaries with little attachment for the land of their adoption, they met and decided to join the English on some conditions. These conditions were : Firstly, the Company should have regard for their (Mughal's) honour and make them confederates in every business ; secondly, they should be granted a proper place for their habitation (in one letter they demanded the Doab) ; thirdly, more than sixty rupees monthly salary for each trooper and a still higher pay for officers ; fourthly, a month's pay in advance, besides a present of Rs. 100/- per head ; fifthly, for the present no restrictions regarding the size of their horses should be imposed ; sixthly, on the death of a trooper his son or relation be taken into service ; seventhly, a small sum of money be advanced to those of them who were in debt to pay it off ; and lastly, whenever any of them wanted to return to his native country (Iran or Turan), he should be discharged in peace. The Mughals desired that the agreement must be properly signed, sworn and sealed by the Governor and the Council. Acquainting the Board of the substance of his negotiations with the Mughals, Munro added "I must confess that if they are made to join us, whatever confidence we may place in them or service they may be of, so great a number (five to six thousand) leaving the enemy at one time, must be of disservice to them and no doubt make Shuja Dowlah suspicious and jealous of all his other commanders". He further informed the Board that he had offered to pay the Mughals at

1 C. P. C., Vol. I, 2413, 2415-2422 and 2426.

the rate of rupees sixty to seventy monthly ; and still none of them had joined him till then. The Fort William authorities, however, refused to agree to the terms proposed by the Mughal leaders, and advised Munro not to offer more than fifty rupees a month to Shuja-ud-daulah's horsemen, and not to make any agreement with them except that of assigning to them land in the Wazir's dominion. But as the Mughals wanted higher emoluments and a definite agreement on the basis of the above-mentioned conditions, no important leader among them except Asad Khan with his followers joined Munro before the battle of Baksar.[1] The British commander nevertheless realised a part of his object, for the loyalty and discipline of many of the Wazir's troops must have been considerably shaken due to the treasonable proceedings of an important section of his army.

4. The Arrest and Spoliation of Mir Qasim

Since the failure of his Patna expedition Shuja-ud-daulah had for certain reasons been much dissatisfied with Mir Qasim. Firstly, we have it on the authority of an eye-witness that, although the Wazir was, at least ostensibly, fighting on his behalf, the ex-Nawab with the major part of his army had remained utterly inert in the battle of Panch-Pahari on 3rd May, 1764. In the second place, the stipulated monthly subsidy of eleven lakhs of rupees had fallen into arrears, and Mir Qasim appeared to have been anxious to evade payment by trying to escape to Rohtas or to the vicinity of Murshidabad on the plea of going to harass the English and obstruct them in the work of administration, (but the Wazir would not allow him to slip away from his tight grip). Thirdly, the ex-ruler of Bengal often charged Shuja-ud-daulah with low breeding and bad faith, not of course quite openly ; but these remarks made in his inner chamber were regularly communicated to the Wazir by many a disloyal sycophant in Mir Qasim's

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1 C. P. C., Vol. I. 2423-32. Munro's letter to Governor, dated Mir Afzal's garden, 16th September, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 24th Sept. pp. 556-67 ; letter to Munro, dated 24th September, 571-73.

retinue[1] In view of these reasons it was but natural for Shuja-ud-daulah to feel highly annoyed with his guest. His aversion for Mir Qasim must have been intensified by the thought that all the toil and misery of the recent campaign, the repulse from Patna and the painful worry and suspense about the final struggle with the English that was yet to come had been brought on him by that one individual. A close study of the Wazir's correspondence with the English as well as of his doings at this juncture leads one to the unmistakable conclusion that he was very anxious indeed to accommodate matters with the Calcutta authorities, and as they had been insistent on the surrender of Mir Qasim, he wished to remove the original cause of the war by hitting at the ex-Nawab. It is worthy of note that before the Wazir's retreat from before Patna the English, in most of their letters to the Emperor and Shuja-ud-daulah, had only requested that Mir Qasim should either be punished by the Court or delivered to them. He would, of course, not deliver up one who had taken shelter with him, for it offended against the immemorial oriental social etiquette of not betraying a guest into the hands of his enemy. He decided to follow the less odious course, namely, of punishing the ex-Nawab by contriving his arrest and spoliation, which he thought would satisfy the English. It also accorded well with his own secret ambition of possessing himself of the unfortunate refugee's wealth and property. A pretext was easily found. It occurred to the Wazir that during

Sair, II. p. 749-53. Haricharan, 460 a ; Khair-ud-din, 128 ; Maadan, Vol. IV. 238a ; T. M., 244 b. Dr. Nand Lal Chatterji missed this important cause (vide his *Mir Qasim*, p. 257). According to Dr. Chatterji "these accusations were hollow," the real explanation of the Wazir's attitude being his greed of Qasim's wealth and his anxiety to placate the English" (Ibid). He does not refer to Ghulam Husain Khan's impartial and correct version. The Khan was the most exactly contemporary writer and was related to Qasim and not to Shuja. Kalyan Singh, on whose version Dr. Chatterji based his account, wrote much later than Ghulam Husain and Muhammad Ali Ansari.

his tenure of office as *Subahdar* of Bengal, Mir Qasim had failed to remit the annual revenues to the Imperial treasury, and he now sent a message purporting to be from the titular Shah Alam, demanding the arrears of four krores[1] of rupees with a threat of employment of force in the event of non-compliance. Getting nervous, the Mir replied that Beni Bahadur might be deputed to examine the accounts to see if there was anything like arrears due from him. The Wazir took offence at the insinuation and said, "What has Beni Bahadur to do with it? It is a matter between Ali Jah (Mir Qasim) and the Emperor." He threw the hint that the Emperor would extort the money the next day. Confounded to a degree, Mir Qasim deciding to turn *faqir*, probably with a view to exciting the Wazir's pity and making him desist from the course he had chosen, quitted his *masnad*, changed his dress for the coloured robe of a mendicant and took his seat on a mat in a field at a little distance from his camp (8th June, 1764). Shuja-ud-daulah was surprised at the turn of events, and fearing everlasting odium, sent apologetic messages, paid Mir Qasim a visit in person and prevailed upon him to return to the state of a grandee.[2]

The artful Wazir now gave up the policy of an open rupture and after some days' lull, had recourse to the expedient of stabbing the helpless refugee in the back. He had already corrupted many of Mir Qasim's important men by holding out before them hopes of his support and service under his Government. Now he won over Samru, the most powerful of the ex-Nawab's commanders, to his side.[3] On the pretence of demanding their salaries this man with his troops surrounded Mir Qasim's tents and created a great row. The Mir made the payment and told Samru that in view of his limited resources he was obliged to retain the services of only two regiments and that he (Samru) should therefore dismiss the rest

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1 C. P. C., Vol. I. 2063, 2064; Ghulam Ali, II. 178.
2 Sair, II. 754; Khair-ud-din, 128; T. M., 245 a.
3 Ghulam Ali, II. 177-78; Imad, 93; Sair, II. 755; T. M., 244b.

and take charge of the guns and other weapons from the discharged troops. Samru, who had already had an understanding with Shuja-ud-daulah, said that the guns belonged to those who had them in their possession, and then quitting Mir Qasim's camp, pitched his tents near those of the Wazir. The last scene too was enacted with equally dramatic suddenness. Next morning, the Awadh troops surrounded the ex-Nawab's camp, and their leaders marching into his inner apartments, brought him out, and having seated him on an elephant, conducted him as a prisoner to the Wazir. All the treasure, furniture and effects of the ex-Nawab, except some jewels that he had managed to send away to Najib-ud-daulah's territory before he was surprised and some others that had been secreted by the ladies and maid-servants of his *harem*, were taken possession of by Shuja-ud-daulah who kept the lion's share for himself and deposited only a fraction of it in the Imperial treasury. This took place about the middle of August, 1764.[1]

Even Shuja-ud-daulah could not altogether ignore public opinion. In this endeavour to justify his conduct against his helpless guest, he concocted the absurd story that Mir Qasim had directed Samru to open fire on him while he (Shuja) was retreating to his camp after the battle of Panch-Pahari. The Awadh courtly flatterers of a later generation went a step further, and placed it on record that Mir Qasim had petitioned Shah Alam, requesting him to confer on him the Wizarat (premiership) and appoint him *subahdar* of Awadh for which he would pay a *peshkash* of one krore in cash and fifty thousand in jewels, besides an yearly revenue of two krores of rupees, and for this reason Shuja-ud-daulah had to contrive the ex-Nawab's downfall, as it were in self-defence.[2] The tale is a malicious invention of the nineteenth century writers of the Lucknow court, and for obvious reasons needs no refutation.

Mir Qasim was made over to the custody of a trusted officer named Mir Fateh Ali Khan, who appointed his nephew

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[1] Ghulam Ali, II. 179 ; C. P. C., Vol. I. 2395.
[2] Sair, II. 756 ; Imad, 93.

Abul Hasan Khan as his gaoler. Inexperienced and greedy, this young man attempted to torture the ex-Nawab to get a clue to the latter's secreted jewels. Fateh Ali Khan, however, intervened in time and saved him from a sure death. In the anguish of his mind, Mir Qasim complained, "What does the Nawab-Wazir want from me now ? He has seized whatever I possessed. If his object is to kill me, I am ready in the name of God. If, however, he wishes to spare my life, he may say so, so that I may go wherever I like." Fateh Ali Khan, having been touched by the plaintive wail, procured the princely prisoner's release. On the eve of the fatal contest at Baksar, Mir Qasim was lucky enough to escape, though to live a miserable life and die a commoner's death.[1]

5. The English acquire Rohtasgarh

Long before this time Major Hector Munro, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief, had arrived at Patna and set to work with his characteristic zeal and energy to restore the discipline and morale of both the European and Indian parts of the Company's forces. Shortly after this, he heard of Shuja-ud-daulah's negotiations with the governor of Rohtasgarh which was still holding out for Mir Qasim, and desirous of forestalling the Wazir's designs, he exerted himself in time to prevent the fortress from falling into the hands of the enemy. Shuja-ud-daulah had commissioned Mir Sulaiman, a smooth-tongued and cunning ex-steward of Mir Qasim, to correspond with Shahmal the governor and Yaqub the head of the garrison of Rohtas, and to persuade them to deliver it into his hands. Munro chose the historian Ghulam Husain Khan, a friend of Dr. Fullerton, as his medium, and there was a diplomatic tussle between the parties. The Khan impressed upon Shahmal the superiority of the English strength, and advised him not to befriend a losing cause. A shrewd man with a grasp of the political situation, Shahmal willingly enter-

[1] Imad, 93-94. For Qasim's imprisonment and release, etc., see Sair, II. 752-57 ; T. M., 244b-245a ; Imad, 93-94 ; Tabsir, 638 ; Khair-ud-din, 128-29 ; Haricharan, 460a ; Ghulam Ali, II. 177-79 ; Abdul Karim, 300.

ed into a correspondence with Munro, and demanded as the price of the surrender of the fortress "protection of himself, his family and effects ; and that he will be continued to collect the revenues of the villages there as usual ; that his people will be taken into the service and receive the pay due to them from July last." The Major agreed to the terms which were also subsequently sanctioned by the Calcutta authorities, and on 11th September directed Captain Goddard, then at Tikari, to march with his battalion to Rohtas and take charge of the fort. Captain Stables, with 500 horse and 1000 troops from the army of the Nawab of Bengal, was ordered to go and assist Goddard[1]. The orders were speedily carried out. On the approach of the English army, Sulaiman, who had already arrived at Rohtas, left the place and Shahmal peacefully handed over the important fortress into the hands of Goddard about the end of September, 1764.

6. Shuja-ud-daulah's anxiety for Peace ; Final Peace talks

As the rainy season began to draw to a close, Shuja-ud-daulah's anxiety for a cessation of hostilities and an accommodation with the English deepened with the lapse of time. He had already despatched Shitab Rai to Patna to resume peace talks, and finding the English attitude rather stiff he agreed to the Rai's journeying to Calcutta and negotiating directly with the Governor and Council of Fort William. At the end of August, 1764, he wrote one letter to the Governor and another to the Council, assuring them of his desire for peace, and informed them that Mir Qasim had been duly punished and they could have therefore no 'pretence' left. They should, he added, now desist from hostilities and be friends. The Wazir made Shah Alam write to Vansittart that he should listen to the representation of Shitab Rai, make peace and return to the path of duty and obedience to the Mughal Crown. Both the Emperor and the Wazir further desired that an Englishman of note might be sent to the Court to discuss and settle the

Sair, II. 758 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. 556-73 ; C. P. C., Vol. I. 2424 & A.

terms of a treaty. Mir Jafar also urged the necessity of peace with Shuja-ud-daulah. The Governor and Council, insisting on the original conditions, replied both to the King and the Wazir on 12th September, that as their forces were still ravaging Bengal and Bihar, as Mir Qasim had not been punished adequately and in the manner requested, and as Samru and the European deserters had been entertained in the Wazir's service, their minds were not at ease, and that they would not send anybody to discuss the preliminaries unless the Wazir's army had been withdrawn from Bihar and Samru and the European deserters had been delivered into their hands to be punished according to European laws. On 15th September, the Bengal Board resolved to bring the war to a speedy conclusion by forcing Shuja-ud-daulah to come to an open engagament, and directed Major Munro not to pay heed to the negotiations, but take the field as soon as possible, bring the enemy to an action, carry war into his country and bring it soon to an end by compelling the Wazir to submit and deliver Mir Qasim, Samru and the deserters, and making him powerless to invade the Company's territory again. Exactly nine days later the Governor and Council urged Munro again to push on with the war without delay.[1]

The Calcutta Board's discouraging replies seem to have disappointed Shuja-ud-daulah, and he discontinued correspondence with the English for about a fortnight. Then, in the first week of October, when Munro had already begun his march to fight the memorable battle of Baksar and was about to cross the Sone unopposed, the Wazir wrote what seems to have been his last letter to Mir Jafar, complaining that the English had refused to entertain his proposal for a peace, which was so essential in their own interest as well as in that of the country. Even now peace was possible, he added, if the English relinquished Patna and agreed to pay revenue for Bengal. Maharajah Beni Bahadur also endeavoured to

[1] Ben. Sec. Cons. II. 518-22, 531-38, 571-73, 610 ; Sair, II. 758 ; C. P. C., I. 2405-409.

persuade the Bengal Nawab to use his influence towards the same end. These letters do not appear to have been replied to, and therefore, a few days later, when the English army was about to make its appearance within a few miles of Baksar, the Emperor made his last effort, no doubt at the instance of Shuja-ud-daulah, solemnly promising that the Imperial army would march away towards Delhi, if the English Governor acted according to the message of peace with which Shitab Rai had been charged. There was now no time to be lost, and Shuja-ud-daulah himself wrote his final letter to the Governor, acknowledging the latter's of the 12th September, and repeating that Mir Qasim had been adequately punished and the English should therefore have no cause of complaint or dissatisfaction. They should surrender Bihar, remit the usual tribute to the Imperial treasury and look upon the proposed accommodation as a heaven-sent blessing. If not, "whatever is the will of God will be done."[1]

Even a casual perusal of the correspondence between the parties reveal Shuja-ud-daulah's earnest desire for peace, though he was anxious to secure the cession of Bihar. The Governor and Council at Fort William were no doubt equally eager to end the war, but not unless their original conditions had been conceded in full. They did not respond to the Wazir's overtures under the mistaken notion that peace was possible only after Shuja-ud-daulah had been decisively beaten, driven back and made unfit to invade Bengal again. From the beginning to the end they insisted on the surrender of Mir Qasim, Samru and the European deserters as conditions precedent to peace, while the Wazir, though invariably demanding the cession of Bihar, showed a disposition to relent.

7. Munro Marches to Baksar

Shuja-ud-daulah's negotiations had not in any way hampered the progress of Munro's work. Before despatching Goddard to take charge of Rohtasgarh, he took steps to suppress a mutiny of the sepoys in Captain Gailliez's battalion,

[1] C. P. C., Vol. I. 2443-447.

who had demanded prize money and set the Captain's authority at naught. Munro stamped out sedition by suppressing the mutiny with a strong hand and ordering eight out of the twenty five ring-leaders to be blown away from the guns on the spot and seventeen to be executed at three different places in the province. By 5th October the dispositions of his army had been completed, but he could not begin his march for three days more owing to heavy rain. When the sky became clear Munro left the vicinity of Patna early in the morning of the 9th and encamped at Maner in the evening. A part of the army crossed the Sone at Koilwar on the 10th to join the battalion under Major Champion who had arrived from Chhapra on the western bank of the river, in compliance with the Commander-in-Chief's orders. Careless though Shuja-ud-daulah had been in making preparations for the coming contest, he had despatched some of his troops with some guns to the ferry of Koilwar on the Sone to obstruct the passage of the English army. But this detachment could not stand against Champion's battalion and, after some shots had been exchanged, retreated towards the town of Arrah. Munro now crossed the river with the whole of his force on the 11th and spent the next day on the other bank.[1]

At about 5 o'clock in the morning of 18th October, the army resumed its march in the direction of Arrah. About one hour after their start, as the English advance-guard under Major Champion reached the Qaimnagar bridge on the Nagin Nadi, one and a half miles east of Arrah, they were badly surprised by a body of cavalry, perhaps under the command of Mir Wali-ullah, *faujdar* of a subdivision of the Shahabad district, who had kept the Wazir informed of Munro's movements. These troops had concealed themselves in an ambush at the strategic spot, and when a part of the English advance-guard had crossed the bridge, they made their appearance all of a sudden and disputed the passage. Rushing upon the

Williams, p. 34-36 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. II. 552-567, 610. Sec. Let. to C. of D. I. 13-14; Sair, II. 761 ; T. M., 247 a.

British troops, they attacked them - and threw their ranks into great confusion. Everybody began to shift for himself, and the confusion lasted till the officer commanding the English division, drawing his men opposite to the enemy, opened fire and drove the attacking cavalry back. In this short contest the British army lost 4 sergeants, 12 European troopers and 40 Mughal horse in the Company's service. As Shuja-ud-daulah's horse continued hovering on the flanks and giving trouble, Munro henceforth advanced slowly and cautiously, and proceeding *via* Arrah (13th), Puthal (19th), Bhojpur Qadim (20th) and Kulharia (21st), reached the plain of Baksar (between the villages of Jagdishpur and Churamanpur) at about 9 in the morning of 22nd October, 1764.

8. The Rivel Forces come face to face at Baksar

Shuja-ud-daulah's entrenchment was situated, as we have seen, at a little distance to the east of the fort of Baksar, and its front line, facing the east, was protected by a long mud wall from the bank of the Ganga to near that of the Thora, with some gap between the southern end of the mud fortification and the latter rivulet. Outside the wall, about three miles away from the English, was drawn up the Wazir's army in battle order at the time of Munro's entrance into the plain, and they received the British, "with a few shots, which fell short, and after looking at each other for more than an hour Shuja-ud-daulah withdrew within his lines."[1] While the British troops were busy making arrangements for setting up their encampment, M. Gentil, the head of the French troops in the Awadh ruler's service, having sought an interview with the Wazir, advised him not to let the enemy have time to form themselves in order of battle, and urged that if an attack were made at the most opportune moment when the English were fatigued, unprepared and occupied with unloading their baggage and stores and pitching their tents, they were likely

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[1] Williams, 39-42 ; Broome, I. 463-64 ; Innes, 199. After a careful consideration of the various versions, I agree with Mr. Oldham (vide his scholarly paper in B. O. R. S. J. Vol. XII. part I) about the place and date of this surprise attack.

to be defeated and put to flight. But if they were given time, he added, to prepare themselves after their own manner, it would be impossible to attain a decisive advantage over them. Shuja-ud-daulah dismissed this right proposal with a laugh, accompanied by this usual remark "You may leave the mode of war with these people to my discretion and judgment." The Wazir's original plan seems to have been, if we may believe Ghulam Husain Khan, to fight a defensive battle from behind the cover of the wall in front of his entrenchment. But for some reason he now changed his mind, and during that very day (22nd) abandoned the resolution of a defensive war in favour of an open pitched battle, which he decided to fight the next morning (23rd). There is reason to believe that before nightfall he had drawn up his scheme of the battle and given final orders for the disposition of his troops in the field. We know it from the reports of the Bengal spies submitted to Munro, that Shuja-ud-daulah's force had remained under arms the whole night, and that he had sent away his women and treasures to Faizabad before the day dawned on the 23rd.[1]

On their arrival the British troops encamped on the wide plain to the north of Jagdishpur and between the old village of Churamanpur and the modern one of Katkauli, though in compliance with Munro's orders none took off his arms or accoutrements. A battalion of sepoys was sent to the village of Nadaon, situated at a small distance on the English left flank, to watch the enemy's movement. Munro himself, assisted by some of his colleagues made a reconnaissance and decided to make a surprise attack on the Wazir between one and two A. M. on the 23rd, by passing to his rear through the gap between the Thora and the right end of Shuja-ud-daulah's wall. But the plan could not be executed as the spies who had been advanced to ascertain the route did not return in time. Munro now convened a council of war wherein it was decided to give rest to the army for a day and fight on the 24th ; still he kept his troops in readiness for a battle,

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[1] Khair-ud-din, 131 ; Sair, II. 762 ; J. B. O. R. S., XII. 21.

arranged according to the order he had issued on the 13th, and went out more than once along with his principal officers to reconnoitre the enemy's position and to keep himself informed of his movements and intentions.[1]

Before the day dawned on the 23rd of October, 1764, Shuja-ud-daulah was ready for the fateful contest. He had completed his dispositions and sent away his *harem* and treasures to a place of safety. Mir Qasim had been set at liberty the evening before and allowed to wend his way to wherever he liked, and the Emperor was not disturbed in his camp on the western bank of the Thora. Before daybreak the Wazir's army had taken up its position outside the mud wall and he had marshalled his troops in battle order. Samru, Gentil and Madec with their eight trained and disciplined battalions, European artillery and eight field pieces, formed the first line of the centre, and behind them was posted a select body of six to seven thousand Mughal horse and foot under the command of Shuja Quli Khan *alias* Mian Isa, a gallant and spirited officer, long in the Wazir's service. The right wing was under the personal command of Shuja-ud-daulah himself, and was composed of the regiments of Rajah Balwant Singh and the pick of the Durrani and Mughal horse who had once served Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali. The left wing consisted of the Najib battalions and the Shaikhzadas of Kakori and Lucknow under Ghulam Qadir and was commanded by Beni Bahadur. It rested on the Ganga not far from the town and the fort of Baksar, and these two latter places were held by a small reserve corps. In this order, with artillery in front from one end to the other, Shuja-ud-daulah issued out of his lines and drew up his troops opposite to the British encampment. The total strength of his army is estimated by an absolutely contemporary Marathi letter, which is, however, not quite accurate regarding facts and figures, at 30,000. John Williams, who was present in the English army and took part

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[1] Munro's letter to Ben. Board, dated Buxar, 25th Oct., 1764 ; J. B. O. R. S., Vol. XII. p. 21 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. Vol. II. Williams, p. 42.

in the battle, says that the Wazir's army was reported to be 50,000 strong. According to Arthur Broome and P. R. Innes, who usually, follows the former, it numbered between forty and fifty thousand. From the figures given by Khair-ud-din, the number would go up to 47,000. Gentil, the commander of the French corps in the Wazir's service, who took an active part in the fighting and was in a position to have full knowledge about his master's force, estimates it at 40,000. His figure seems to be approximate to the truth.[1]

Major Munro had not in the least imagined that Shuja-ud-daulah would take up the offensive, and when immediately after his return from a reconnaissance early in the morning of the 23rd he was informed by Champion that the enemy was advancing for an attack, he gave no credence to the news. It is clear from the account given by Champion that the Commander-in-Chief behaved as if a battle was not imminent. He ordered a battalion under Watts, posted in village Nadaon on the English left flank, to leave the village and join Harper's battalion that was stationed on the right flank, and Morgan with his battalion was directed to take post in Nadaon in the place of Watts. After these changes had been effected, Munro was informed that the enemy was very near the British left wing which in consequence was exposed to danger. Now the Commander-in-Chief directed drums to beat to arms, and sent orders to Morgan to retreat with his battalion from Nadaon immediately. By this time Shuja-ud-daulah's army had arrived before Nadaon and begun firing. The British force was still in the process of formation in the field, each battalion taking its rightful place according to the dispositions settled by Munro on the 13th, and by 9 o'clock it was in order. Meanwhile, in obedience to orders, Morgan's battalion had been retreating from Nadaon from before the enemy, Shuja-ud-daulah's artillery pouring a murderous fire from behind. Morgan suffered heavily, and so great was the confusion in the

1 Sair, II. 762 ; Khair-ud-din, 131 ; T. M., 247 a : S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. L. 50 ; Williams, 52 ; Broome, Vol. I. 476 ; Innes, 204 ; Gentil, 238.

ranks of his battalion that it lost more than a hundred troops before reaching back to the lines.[1]

Before 9 o'clock Shuja-ud-daulah's army had advanced to within about 500 yards of the English lines, and there they seemed to halt, the whole presenting a grand spectacle. Their left rested upon the Ganga, while their right bent a little inward so as to "bring their guns to bear on the left face of the English square", which, being narrow, presented a contrast to the long and extended front of the Wazir's army. A brisk cannonading began as they arrived near. Munro's troops, who were still forming into lines were, after some changes in the original position of some of the units had been made, drawn up in the following order. The entire British army numbering nearly 8,000 men and 22 pieces of cannon[2] was divided into two lines, both facing west, and between them were posted two battalions of European troops under the command of Captain Hay to form the reserve. The centre of the first line consisted of two European battalions (one on the right under Captain Wemyss and the other under Captain Macpherson), with artillery between them and also to their right and left. The right wing was composed of two sepoy battalions, one under Wilding and the other under Feake, with artillery on its flank ; the left was in a like manner made up of two sepoy battalions under Watts aud Morgan respectively, and its flank was protected by field guns. The composition and disposition of the second line were exactly of the same type, —two European battalions in the centre with artillery between them and on either flank, and the right and left wings composed of two battalions of sepoys each flanked by artillery. In the north-east corner behind the second line were posted the Mughal cavalry in the Company's service and some sepoys commanded by Lieutenants Muir and Virtue

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1 J. B. O. R. S., Vol. XII, 21-23 ; Munro's letter to Ben. Board, dated 25th October, referred to above ; Williams, 43.

2 Williams, 45 and 37. According to Forrest (Clive, II. 244) it numbered 7072 men and 20 field pieces. Broome (1. 472) and Innes (p. 204) put it as 7080 men.

respectively, to protect the baggage, the stores and the magazine. Champion commanded the whole of the right wing of the first line and Stibbert the left wing, while the rear line was in charge of Major Charles Pemble. Jennings was the head of the artillery in the first and Captain Winwood that of the second line.[1]

9. The Battle of Baksar described

The British army took about half an hour to complete its formation. For the whole of this time Shuja-ud-daulah's guns continued firing ; but the English could make no reply. Their dispositions being completed, they began their advance about nine. Hardly had they covered a distance of 100 yards, when their left was brought to a halt, due to the presence in its front of an extensive morass. In order to avoid it, the whole of the front line had to turn and march to the north and then to the west to face the enemy. This took another half an hour, and thus the Wazir's army had the clear start of one hour, his heavy field-pieces playing upon the British troops, then engaged in forming and dressing their lines. "But their (Shuja-ud-daulah's army's) guns were not well-served," writes John Williams who fought in the ranks of the Marines in the first line, "otherwise from the number they had in the field, they must have torn us to pieces."[2] Although many a man on the British side succumbed to the cannon-balls the loss was not heavy.

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1 Munro's diagram of the order of the British army at Baksar attached to his letter of 25th October, 1764, vide Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th Nov., 1764, Vol. II, 652 ; Williams, 43-44 ; Broome, I. 472 ; Innes, 203. Munro's diagram shows the disposition of the army as fixed by him on 13th October. On the 25th he had made some changes in the original scheme, due of course to the exigencies of the hour, and these he forgot to insert in the diagram. Almost all modern writers except Broome (and Innes who follows Broome's version) have fallen into error by following this diagram. For an account and explanation of the discrepancies, see Mr. Oldham's scholarly paper in J. B. O. R. S., Vol. XII. 24-25.

2 Williams, 46. Munro, in his letter of 25th Oct., says that they were "well-levelled and equally well-disposed."

By half past nine the action became general. The artillery duel yielded place to charges and counter-charges. Shuja-ud-daulah wisely sent a detachment of his horse from the right to attack the enemy's left flank and rear. Issuing out of the lines in a south-easterly direction, these Mughal, Durrani and Naga cavalry made a detour south of Jagadishpur and the morass that lay north-east of it, and emerged between that marshy land and the left flank of the English army. The detachment, having quickly closed up, attacked the enemy flank and rear, attemping to cut a passage between the two lines. On their near approach the sepoy battalions, composing the southern half of the left wings of the British lines, wheeled together with the artillery posted on their flanks half round, thus closing the gap between the two lines and facing south to meet the advancing foe. The reserve, consisting of European grenadiers and cavalry, under Captain Hay, moved forward from the centre in the gap between the lines, to reinforce what had now become the united left flank. The entire rear line, except the battalion in the extreme south turned their faces to the east, and thus the English flank and rear received the charges made by the Wazir's detachment. The Mughals, Durranis and Nagas made repeated charges, and breaking the English flank, attempted to push on to the European grenadiers of the reserve. In the third attempt, five or six gallant Mughal officers bravely forced their way and made a furious attack on the Europeans ; and the latter could successfully repel them only after the brave and spirited leader of the assailants had succumbed to two wounds, one from a bayonet and the other from a bullet. Had they been reinforced, it is certain that they would have broken the entire British left flank and put the European grenadiers to flight, and the result of the battle might have been different. "I fancy", writes Harper, "had but one or two thousand of the enemy's cavalry behaved as well as those few that attacked the grenadiers, we should have lost the day."

The attack on the British rear was not pressed with so much vigour and steadiness, and the Wazir's horse, Mughal

and Durrani and perhaps Naga also, not being able to stand the more regular and effective fire from European guns, beat a retreat.[1] The failure seems to have so much damped their spirits that they did not renew operations, and actuated by a vulgar love of plunder, they marched away to the village of Churamanpur to the north-east of the British lines, where were deposited the enemy's baggage, stores and magazine, defended by some Mughal horse under Lieutenant Muir and sepoys under Virtue. One charge of the Awadh detachment was enough to inflict a crushing defeat on the Indian horse in the Company's service and to put them to an ignominious flight. In great confusion and with precipitation Muir with his cavalry retreated to take shelter with the main army. Virtue was similarly beaten and driven out of his position ; but under cover of fire from the rear line he was able to retire safely and join the lines. The camp-followers of the English army being struck with terror, fled in a circuitous route by Arjunpur and Ahirauli towards the Ganga. After this the detachment fell into the congenial work of plunder and devastation. The Mughals, both Irani and Turani, and more especially the latter, were faithless mercenaries and were noted for their love of falling on the baggage and treasure of either of the parties whichever happened to be within their easy reach in the course of a battle. In the present case they could not restrain themselves when they found that they were masters of the entire English provisions, baggage and stores. With their characteristic zeal, worthy of a better cause, they remained absorbed in plunder and pillage, joined by the Nagas of Himmat Bahadur,[2] till the tide of the battle had definitely turned against their master in another corner of the field and

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[1] Sair, II. 702 ; Broome, I. 475 ; Innes, 205 ; Champion's Diary ; J. B. O. R. S., XII. 27-28 ; Tabsir, 640 ; Williams, 46.

[2] Sair, II. 702 ; T. M., 247a ; Tabsir, 640 ; Williams, 46 ; Broome, 475 ; Innes, 205 ; Gentil, 238 ; Madec, 33 ; J. B. O. R. S., XII, 28.

the crown of victory had graced the brow of Major Hector Munro.

While the Awadh detachment had been pressing the English hard on the left and in the rear, in the front too the Wazir seemed to be scoring a clear advantage over the enemy. Eight battalions of trained infantry armed with European muskets and under such able commanders as Gentil, Madec and Samru, with heavy and well-served field-pieces in front, had pushed on to very near the British lines and were raining a veritable death-storm on Munro's centre and right wing, while the latter's troops could not advance towards their left or front due to the presence of a morass on one side and the enemy force on the other. The British army was in fact brought to a halt and practically hemmed in on three sides, namely, west, south and east, and the situation seemed critical. Shuja-ud-daulah under these circumstances naturally expected an easy victory, and his partisans believed that the English troops were about to collapse.[1] But fortunately for the British, this state of helplessness did not last long and the mistakes of their foe became the cause of their success, if not of their deliverance. Unlike Munro, Shuja-ud-daulah does not seem to have had a general's eye, watching the development of the contest in every corner of the field, and to his initial mistake of choosing a bad ground with deep stickly morasses in his front and on his right flank, which hampered the advance of his troops and the charges of his cavalry, he added that of not sending any reinforcement at all to the cavalry divisions he had deputed to charge the British flank and rear. Nor did he supervise the action in that quarter. In fact, there is no evidence to show that he had any information that the Mughals and their companions, having abandoned the grim fighting which they had almost

1 This seems to be the explanation of the remarks of Gentil, Madec, Ghulam Husain Khan, Khair-ud-din and other historians that the British were practically defeated and Munro thought of flight, but he made a final and desperate effort and won due to the faithlessness of the Wazir's Mughals and the weakness of his left wing under Beni Bahadur.

won, had taken to the more agreeable work of attacking the enemy's baggage. On the other hand, Munro, while hemmed in on three sides, clearly realised that hope lay in advancing towards his left, where alone was enough room for movement. Promptly did he decide to have a trial of strength with Shuja-ud-daulah's left wing under Beni Bahadur, which though bent round so as nearly to enclose the English right, had not yet fully come into action.

Some troops, presumably of the Wazir's Najib battalions with three batteries, having detached themselves from the left wing, had taken up their post near the village of Ahirauli (about 2 furlongs east of the Ganga and in front of the north-west corner of the British right flank) and in the grove south of it, and their guns were harassing the enemy's right wing and flank and doing much execution. "Some wavering was now perceptible" in this part of the English army. In order to silence these fire-vomitting batteries, Munro sent orders some-time before noon to Captain Feake, who was in charge of the first battalion in the right wing of the front line, to march to Ahirauli and attack the enemy there. As Feake moved forward, a battalion of the Najibs opened fire on him, and two powerful contingents of cavalry, rushing quickly forward, attacked both his flanks, and throwing his ranks into disorder, forced him to beat a hasty retreat.[1] After his two successive attempts had met with a complete failure, Feake was replaced by Lieutenant Nichol in command of the battalion. Captain Harper, who was in charge of the first battalion in the right wing of the rear line, was ordered to sppport Nichol, and their united battalions succeeded in dislodging the enemy from Ahirauli and in capturing their guns. This was the first success

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1 Williams, 47 ; Broome, I. 476 ; Innes 206. According to Williams it was Stibbert and not Feake. Munro writes in his letter of 25th Oct., referred to above, "I was forced to order a battalion of sepoys with one gun from the right of the first line to silence one of the batteries which played upon our flank and obliged to support it by another battalion from the second line which had the desired effect."

that Munro's troops achieved since the engagement had begun, and it was a very ordinary success indeed; but it heartened his men and encouraged them to make greater efforts. Munro now ordered both his lines to face to the right and march very slowly in order to clear the left side of the morass. This done, the British commander detached some more troops from the right wing to reinforce the united battalions of Nichol and Harper, who, in spite of their great exertion, had been unable to overcome another body of the Wazir's troops belonging to Beni Bahadur's division and posted in a grove south of Ahirauli. But they were accorded a fitting reception by the Najibs who made a furious charge on their flanks and drove them back in confusion. Seeing this, Major Champion, commander of the right wing of the first line, moved forward with all his battalions, supported by artillery, to the succour of the defeated and disorganised troops, and having got into a line with them arranged the whole in proper order. Then he proceeded against the Najibs. As he arrived within gun-range, he was greeted with balls from the Najib battery, which probably did little execution. At any rate, the fire could not prevent Champion's further advance. Pushing on and on, Champion with his troops got clear of the trees and gave the confounded Najibs such a steady and effective fire that they could not stand any longer and took to flight, leaving their guns behind. At the back of the grove, Champion found 27 big guns, some of which Shuja-ud-daulah had captured from the British during his campaign in the previous summer.[1]

The Najib battalions, thus driven out of the grove south of Ahirauli, fled not towards the Ganga to rejoin Beni Bahadur, but towards the Wazir's centre under Samru, Madec and Gentil and posted themselves, not in a line with it but a little ahead of the batteries of these three foreign commanders. This caused some confusion in Shuja-ud-daulah's centre, and Samru and Madec had to shift their artillery and troops to a new position and form a new alignment further south facing some part of the morass. Taking advantage of this, the

[1] Broome, 477; Innes, 207; Williams, 47-48.

British left wing under Stibbert, which had till that time been hard pressed, moved forward, as the Wazir's troops who had attacked the English left flank and rear had been repelled and were out of the field, busy plundering the baggage and provisions. Major Champion too with the right wing now inclined towards the Wazir's centre from the north. The tide of battle thus began to turn in favour of Munro.

About this very time the two sepoy battalions under Nichol and Harper, who, after having co-operated with Champion in driving out the Najibs and detached themselves from the right wing, were proceeding westward, from the *tope* south of Ahirauli, to fall upon Shuja-ud-daulah's left wing under Beni Bahadur, that lay behind the shelter of the deserted house near the bank of the Ganga. Advancing slowly and unperceived, the two brave young officers reached very close to the ruined houses behind which were standing in leisurely fashion Shaikh Ghulam Qadir and other Shaikhzadas of Lucknow with guns in their hands. Completely ignorant of the English movement, they were now awakened to a sense of danger, when a number of sepoys climbing up the walls threw stones and clods on their heads. Without being dismayed, Ghulam Qadir and his followers hastily formed themselves in order, and endeavoured to defend their position as bravely as they could. The two sides began exchanging a warm fire. The valiant leader of the Shaikhzadas, giving a good account of himself,[1] fought with splendid but fruitless gallantry. It was beyond his strength to make an effective reply with his inferior muskets firing at intervals to the quick and regular volleys from the English guns. In the vain attempt to roll back the advancing tide he sacrificed his life, followed by his two brothers, Ghulam Yasin and Abdul Razzaq and some of their faithful followers. The remaining men took fright and turned their faces towards the river. Maharajah Beni Bahadur with the bulk of his army had taken up his position at a little distance behind the Shaikhzadas, and having observed the change in

[1] Ghulam Ali, II. 181 ; Sair, II. 762 ; Khair-ud-din, 133 ; Tabsir, 640 ; T. M., 247b ; Kalyan, 143b.

the fortune of the battle and the easy overthrow of his trusted vanguard, turned to Ghalib Khan, a worldly-wise Indian Muhammadan in his army, for advice. The Khan replied that if the Rajah wanted honour, he should die fighting ; but if safety of life was dearer to his heart, the best course was an immediate flight. Beni Bahadur declared that he preferred the former and ordered his troops to dismount and give battle, it being the typical Indian behaviour in the crisis of a contest. By this time the sepoys under Nichol and Harper had arrived nearer, and fired a few volleys. Beni Bahadur, getting confused, suddenly changed his mind, and turned his face from the field, followed by his men, including Ghalib Khan and his son.[1]

Having heard the sound of continuous firing by the sepoys in the far-away left wing, Shuja Quli Khan *alias* Mian Isa, who was posted behind the centre, imagined that Beni Bahadur was scoring a decisive advantage over the enemy and that the honour of victory would be ascribed to the Rajah while he himself would stand discredited in the eyes of his master no less than in those of the public and posterity for not having taken a valiant part in the battle. Oppressed by this thought and without in the least ascertaining the correctness or otherwise of his surmise, he left his post immediately, followed by his entire contingent, and marching from behind Samru, Madec and Gentil, rashly rode across their front to charge the distant British centre. Accompanied by six to seven thousand troops, he appeared between the contending forces and in front of Madec and Samru, obliging, these latter commanders to silence their batteries, which by their incessant and effective fire had thinned the ranks of the English and checked their advance. Munro's troops were not slow to turn the enemy's mistake to their advantage, and redoubling their efforts, poured a thicker and deadlier fire than before. Shuja Quli with only a small body of his followers, in an attempt to charge the British front line, plunged into the morass that lay between the two hostile armies, and getting entangled in the

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[1] Sair, II. 762 ; Kalyan, 143b ; T. M., 247b ; Khair-ud-din, 135.

deep sticky mud, became so many helpless targets of the enemy's guns. With unspeakable misery Mian Isa floundered through the *jhil* to fall on the English, but only to become a vain sacrifice to their cannon-balls. Shaikh Muhammad Akbar and some other devoted attendants of the Mian met with a similar fate, while the rest of his troops turned back and fled in a headlong rout. Many others, besides those belonging to Mian Isa's battalion, left the field in imitation of their example, in confusion and alarm.

Meanwhile, the battalions of Nichol and Harper had, after having driven Beni Bahadur out, marched on to Shuja-ud-daulah's camp at the back of his lines, and falling upon the men posted for its defence created so great a panic among them that without any thought for their baggage and effects they fled away pell-mell. Taking advantage of the confusion the Wazir's Mughal and Durrani troops, faithless foreign mercenaries that they were, fell on their deserted master's provisions and stores in his magnificent camp and carried away all they could. Thus forsaken in the time of a crisis, the Wazir, finding only a small body of men around his person, quitted the field to join the fugitives, leaving 2,000 of his men dead on the ground. All was now over with the huge and magnificently accoutred army of Shuja-ud-daulah. All the stores, provisions, baggage and cash in his camp that had escaped the predatory hands of his Mughals (valued at £12,000) became the property of the victors. Besides these, the English acquired 172 guns. The battle had begun at 9 and ended at 5 minutes to 12, having lasted for about three hours. But the Wazir himself retired from the field a little later.[1]

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[1] For the battle of Baksar see Saif, II. 761-64 ; Ghulam Ali, II. 181-85 ; M. L., 72-73 ; Khair-ud-din, 130-34 ; Tabsir, 640 ; T. M., 247a-248a ; Jama-ut-Tawarikh, 262 ; Kalyan, 142a-144a ; Mirat, 255a ; Haricharan, 460a-461a ; Imad, 95-96 ; Munro's letter of 25th Oct., 1764, already referred to ; Diaries of Champion and Harper, Journal of Swinton ; Broome, 467-79 ; Williams, 34-58 ; Innes, 201-09 ; Gentil, 238-39 ; Madec, 32-34 ; S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. 50 ; Mr.

10. The Importance and Consequences of the Battle of Baksar

The battle of Baksar was very hotly contested. Whether judged from the point of view of the status and strength of the parties to the struggle, or the toughness of the contest or its decisive character and consequences, it ranks among the most important battles of India, despite the fact that it lasted for three hours only. Those in charge of the nascent British dominion in India had to fight in this battle not with a mere provincial governor or a local potentate, a Siraj-ud-daulah or a Mir Qasim, with little connection with the rest of the country, but with the hereditary Wazir of the Mughal Empire, who, though only nominally a noble and minister, still commanded respect throughout the land. The shadowy Mughal Emperor with whose name was associated incredibly great moral and political prestige, if not power, was held in his leading strings. Apart from his official dignity and rank in the Imperial court, Shuja was the most important and influential Indian chief of his time. Najib-ud-daulah had completed his life's work and was ending his days at Delhi. Events that were to bring about the death of Surajmal and the downfall of his kingdom were shaping themselves; and Mahadji Sindhia of the future was yet in the making. These were the only Indian rulers who could dispute with Shuja-ud-daulah the claim of being the first chief in Hindustan. The Nawab-Wazir had reached the noontide splendour of his power, and his territorial possessions, financial resources, military establishment and hereditary wazirship had marked him out for that honour and given him a unique position in the whole country. The contest itself, though short was nevertheless extremely sharp; it was well-matched and bloody, and the issue remained uncertain till the last moment. Competent eye-witnesses, gifted with uncommon powers of obser-

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Oldham's scholarly paper in J. B. O. R. S., XII. 138; Caraccioli's Life of Clive, Vol. I, 165-167; Governor and Council's letter to C. D. dated 26th Nov., 1764, Vol. I. 13-15.

vation and judgment, recorded that more than once the tide of the battle was in favour of the Wazir and he narrowly missed the honour of a victory. Referring to the attack on the British left flank and rear by the Wazir's cavalry, Major Alexander Champion writes in his diary that "had they (Shuja-ud-daulah's horse) been well-seconded, they would have carried that part." Lieutenant Harper observes, "I fancy had one or two thousand of the enemy's cavalry behaved as well as those few that attacked the grenadiers, we should have lost the day." He concludes his account of the battle by adding : "*The chance was more than once against us*, and I am of opinion the sepoys *would not have been able to stand the cannonade five minutes longer than they did.*"[1] The British lost, according to Munro, 825 men in killed and wounded, of whom 79 were Europeans, while according to John Williams, who too was a participant in the battle, the loss amounted to 1000 lives, of whom 101 were Europeans, that is one in every 8 or 9 troops in the whole army. On Shuja-ud-daulah's side perished 6000 men in all, if we may believe Munro's statement, including killed and wounded in the field and those drowned in the Thora[2] during their attempted flight from the battle-field, the ratio of the loss to the total strength of his army being nearly the same as that of his adversary.

The political results of the battle were even more important. "The victory has proved so complete and decisive," wrote the President and Council of Fort William to the Court of Directors on 26th November, 1764, "that our troops meet with no further opposition."[3] Thereafter Shuja-ud-daulah,

1 Harper's Diary ; J. B. O. R. S., Vol. XII. 35 ; Return of killed and wounded enclosed with Munro's letter of 25th Oct., already referred to above ; Williams, 50.

2 Shuja's 2000 men lay dead on the field (C.P.C.I., 2458 ; Gentil, 238 ; Broome, I. 480). Among the notables who perished in the field were Mian Murtaza, Ali Akbar Khan and Muhammad Raza, besides Mian Isa and Ghulam Qadir. Jahangir Khan was wounded by a cannon-ball and Madec and Samru by musket shots. (C. P. C., I. 2458).

3 Secret Letters to C. D., Vol. I. p. 14.

the erstwhile proud Wazir of the Empire and ruler of millions, was a fugitive, compelled to beseech the aid of and seek shelter with his hereditary foes, the Pathans of Ruhelkhand and Farrukhabad and of the hated Marathas of the Deccan. His flourishing dominion now lay completely at the feet of the English, whom he had commanded a few months before to revert to their original profession of trade and refrain from meddling in politics. Despite the fact that he made two more abortive attempts to retrieve his fortune, the contest for supremacy over Awadh and Allahabad was once for all over : no ruler of Awadh till the extinction of Shuja-ud-daulah's dynasty hereafter dared to measure swords with the British. The battle finally decided the fate of the English in northern India. Not only did the issue assure them the peaceful and permanent possession of Bengal and Bihar and supremacy over the Wazir's *subahs*, but it also opened the path to the Imperial city of Delhi and the rest of India. The titular Emperor stood a suppliant before them, not only ready to legalise the Company's conquest of Bengal and Bihar by his *farmans* (which had great moral and political force), but also willing to enter into any arrangement with the British that left to him his nominal sovereignty, no matter if it gave the substance of power to the Company. The victory enabled the English to rightly advance their claim to be considered one of the most important of the Indian Powers and to extend the range of their ambition to other parts of the country, instead of circumscribing their views and ambitions to Bengal-*cum*-Bihar. The significance of the issue at Baksar can best be realised if we imagine what would have happened, if Munro had lost the day. In that event Shuja-ud-daulah would have certainly swept the Gangetic valley clear of the English, for the number of the Company's troops in Patna, Calcutta and other centres was so small that they could easily have been overcome and even annihilated. If it were permissible to infer what the Wazir as victor in the field of Baksar would have done, from his conduct towards his Ruhela foes ten years afterwards, it may well be doubted if he would have allowed the English, thus shorn of their political power, to reside as peaceful traders in Bengal.

11. The Causes of Shuja-ud-daulah's Defeat

Although numerically much superior, the Awadh army was far inferior to that of the British in organisation, discipline, military training and equipment. With the exception of the French corps under Gentil and Madec and Samru's battalions, Shuja-ud-daulah's troops knew nothing of military drill or regimental discipline, to say nothing of the regular scientific training that was a distinguishing feature of the officers and troops under Munro. His artillery was more numerous and his field-pieces were of various calibres, but they were not as handy and well-served as those of the English. The historian Ghulam Husain Khan noted that the Awadh troops did not fire their guns regularly, nor all at one and the same time at the word of command. They fired at intervals and there was as a rule an unnecessarily long gap between one round and another. The whole army was a heterogeneous crowd of men, animated by little loyalty either to the person of the Wazir or to the cause that they professed to serve, the only exceptions being the two French officers and their comrade Samru (so far as this battle against the English was concerned) and some Hindu and Indian Muslim troops in his service. The mercenary Durranis and the Mughals in particular, had been in treasonable correspondence with the enemy on the eve of the battle and perfectly ready to transfer their services to the English, if they offered to pay them more than Shuja-ud-daulah ; and although they did not desert their master for the obvious reason that the Calcutta Board refused to pay them more than Rs. fifty a month (the rate of payment in the Wazir's army was higher), such faithless and perfidious troops could hardly be expected to do their best, much less to face the grim risk of death. Shuja-ud-daulah himself, the supreme commander of the army, endowed though he was with the basic qualities of a soldier and a general, was vain, pleasure-loving and contemptuous of the opinions and advice of his officers and well-wishers. The historian Ghulam Husain tells us that while Munro was on his march to fight the memorable battle, Shuja was imprudently absorbed in a

variety of sensual pleasures, in chess, in pigoen-flying, kite-flying and so on, as if he had been on a pleasure-trip in his own dominions. In conducting the battle he committed some serious mistakes of tactics, which did little credit to his generalship. He personally took the command of the right wing and thus lost touch with, and could not supervise the operations in, the other corners of the field, hence almost surrendering the duty of a supreme general of the whole force. No reinforcement was sent to his first charging cavalry nor to the hard-pressed Shaikhzadas under Ghulam Qadir, nor was any attempt made to check the advance of Nichol and Harper. Quite a large body of the Awadh soldiers displayed splendid dash and gallantry ; but the defeat of Baksar was not accidental. It was caused as much by lack of discipline and organisation as by Shuja-ud-daulah's mistakes and follies.

chapter 9

The final struggle with the English

1. Shuja-ud-daulah's Flight to Allahabad

Tired and dispirited, Shuja-ud-daulah, after the disaster of Baksar, retreated with a band of his devoted followers, in the afternoon of 23rd October, in the direction of the Thora that flows 2 miles west of the fort. Thousands of panic-stricken fugitives from the field crowded on the bridge of boats on that rivulet in feverish hurry, attempting to cross over to the other side before they could be overtaken by the victors. The bridge was 'broken',[1] most probably by the weight of the congested mass of humanity, which it could not support, causing the destruction of thousands of lives, but fortunately after the Wazir with the small remnant of his once magnificent army had reached the western bank of the river. Meanwhile, the victorious English, who had begun a vigorous pursuit of the fugitive army immediately after Shuja-ud-daulah had turned his back, arrived near the bank of the Thora and opened fire on the surging concourse of helpless men, struggling through the sticky mud or trying desperately to swim across the river. Great terror seized the runaways on the appearance of the enemy. About 4,000 to 5,000 men[2] perished in the

In a statement made in 1772, Munro said that the enemy "pierced the boats and sunk them before the rear of the army got over", adding that that was the best piece of generalship showed by the Wazir. This statement is not supported by any other contemporary authority, not even by Munro's own letter of 25th October, 1764.
C. P. C., I. 2453..

river, some from the enemy guns and others from drowning. Shuja-ud-daulah was, however, lucky enough to escape and reach Banaras in safety, his pursuit by the English army having ended about half-past three in the afternoon due to the presence of the unfordable Thora between the victorious army and the fugitives. Munro, after posting guards on both banks of the river, returned to Baksar. Here his men attended to the killed and the wounded, and passed the night in the open, as all their baggage had been plundered by the Wazir's Mughals. On or before 28th October, Shuja-ud-daulah and Beni Bahadur arrived at the ferry of Bahadurpur on the Ganga, opposite to Banaras, and the Nawab-Wazir held consultations with his officers, friends and well-wishers. The party headed by his brother-in-law Salar Jang advised him to invite the Ruhelas and the Marathas and with their assistance make a renewed attempt to humble the English. But Beni Bahadur deprecated the proposal, and urging the wisdom of peace, said, "It is by these counsels that things have been brought to their present state." Shuja-ud-daulah seems to have been anxious to stay on at Banaras, collect an army and make a fresh endeavour to wipe off the disgrace of his defeat and retrieve his fortune by proceeding towards Bihar and attacking the enemy. But as rumour after rumour reached his ears that the English were in pursuit and were approaching Banaras, though as a matter of fact Munro had not yet left Baksar, he approved of Beni Bahadur's proposal and decided to quit Bahadurpur. Having invested the Rajah with full authority to negotiate peace and having instructed him to bring the titular Emperor with him lest he should go over to the English side, Shuja-ud-daulah left for Allahabad.[1] On his arrival at Chunargarh on the Ganga, some 15 miles south-west of Banaras, he was advised by Sidi Muhammad Bashir Khan, commandant of the fort and the latter's friend and colleague Sidi Balal Muhammad Khan to stay there, collect some more troops and resist the English who were not likely to be able to capture that strong fortress, reputed to be impregnable.

[1] C.P.C., I. 2458 ; Sair, II. 764 ; Khair-ud-din, 136.

But he was so panic-stricken that he would not even consider the proposal and marched away to Allahabad, leaving instructions with the Abyssinian commandant to defend the fort. At that place he was joined by most of the fugitives from Baksar, who urged him to renew the struggle, as the English had not yet received reinforcements from Calcutta and it was just likely that he might win this time. He had lost the battle, they said, because of the treachery of some officers who should now be replaced by trusted commanders. Smitten by the humiliation caused by his defeat, Shuja-ud-daulah had grown almost desperate, and he thought mostly of battle and of death ; and anxious to rehabilitate his reputation, he listened to their advice. He wrote to many chiefs and Rajahs and to the Marathas and Mirza Najaf Khan, beseeching their aid and promising them compensation in the shape of money and territory. He raised contributions from his vassals, friends and officers and renewed his preparations for war. Having made arrangements for repairing the fort and putting it in a properly defensive trim, the Wazir gathered an army of 30,000 troops, including some Pathans who had joined him soon after his retreat from Baksar, procured gun-powder and began manufacturing shots.[1]

2. Shah Alam after Baksar

Not quite certain about the attitude of the victorious English, the Emperor (who had, notwithstanding the heroism eulogistically ascribed to him in the action by his court chronicler,[1] had remained utterly inert in his camp at a safe distance from the battle-field on the fateful 23rd of October) retreated to the town of Zamania on the Ganga, 12 miles south of Ghazipur, where he arrived on or before 28th October, 1764. Here Suchit Ram, Shitab Rai's *wakil* at Banaras, sought an interview with him. The fallen monarch expressed his readiness to enter into an alliance with the English, if the latter agreed to grant him an allowance. From Zamania

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1 Khair-ud-din, 136-43 ; Munro's letter to Governor and Council, dated Banaras 22nd November, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th December, 1764, Vol. II. 739.

Shah Alam advanced to Banaras, where Beni Bahadur saw him, and in accordance with the Wazir's wishes, endeavoured to prevail upon him to march to Allahabad. But the Emperor, being dissatisfied with Shuja-ud-daulah (who gave himself airs of equality) and anxious to placate the English, refused to comply. It is worthy of note that as early as May, 1764, just after the battle of Panch-Pahari, the English had made a feeble and private attempt, through the historian Sayyid Ghulam Hussain Khan, to separate the Mughal sovereign from the Wazir and win him over to their side. But on account of a difference of opinion between Dr. Fullerton, the man who had taken the initiative in the matter and who was friendly to the historian, and Major Carnac, the then English Commander-in-Chief, they had failed to realise the object. Next, when the preparations were in full swing for a final struggle at Baksar, Shitab Rai had advised Major Carnac of the necessity of separating the Emperor from the Wazir, but nothing seemed to have been done at that time to effect it. Shuja-ud-daulah's complete defeat now hastened the reconciliation between the English and Shah Alam. Within a day or two of the English victory, the Emperor, now freed from the control of his Wazir, sent congratulatory robes of honour to Munro and a few other English officers as also to Mir Jafar and Vansittart,[1] and wrote to the English Commander-in-Chief, proposing that if the English desired to possess themselves of Shuja-ud-daulah's provinces, the Emperor had no objection, provided that they bound themselves to pay the Imperial revenue. But, if, on the other hand, they had no such ambition, they should remit regularly the tribute from Bengal and the Emperor be allowed to depart for Delhi. Major Munro assured Shah Alam that the British would put him in possession of the throne of Hindustan, but as for the other proposal, he would act in accordance with the instructions he would receive from the Calcutta Board. He requested the Emperor to stay at Banaras, where he would wait

1 Ghulam Ali, II. 185.

1 Ghulam Ali, II. 187; Sair, II. 751, 52, 64 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. of 24th July, 1764, Vol. II. 425; C. P. C., 2456, 58, 67.

on him in a few days. The Governor Vansittart also requested him to admit Munro into his presence, assuring him that the English would not be negligent in promoting "His Majesty's affairs."[1]

3. Munro marches to Banaras

After his memorable victory Major Munro made a few days halt at Baksar with the double purpose of providing medical aid to the wounded and of putting his army in a condition to undertake the conquest of Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion. He despatched the advance division of the army across the Thora on 27th October, while he himself appeared to have remained at Baksar till the 29th. The last division crossed the river on the 30th, and the entire force began its march in the direction of Banaras on the 31st. All kinds of plundering by the troops were strictly forbidden. They arrived near Banaras on 7th November,[2] crossed the river on a bridge of boats and encamped under the wall of the town on the 8th. In obedience to the stringent orders received from the Calcutta Council, Munro, immediately on his arrival near the town, sent some of his troops for the defence of Banaras and issued strict orders against pillaging and plundering the inhabitants. The inhabitants "left the place through fear, and some remained in hopes of being protected. The place is now full of inhabitants, and the merchants have promised four lacks of rupees for the protection given them".[3] The Board gladly approved of the acceptance of this ransom "as a reward to the army for the very signal service they have rendered to the Company," but prohibited any further contribution from the people. We, however, learn from a strictly contemporary Marathi letter written by a citizen of Banaras that wealthy inhabitants and merchants were laid under an unwilling contribution and that there was some looting. People concealed their riches and Rajah Balwant Singh gave the English a clue about the

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1 C. P. C., I. 2469, 70, 73, 74a, 82.
2 J. B. O. R. S., XII. 82; Tabsir, 640.
3 Ben. Sec. Cons., II. 661-63, 738-56.

moneyed persons, who consequently did not come out of their houses. Even Brahmans were not spared.[1]

Having taken steps for the protection of the town, Munro turned his attention to other and more pressing business. An English factory[2] was established at Banaras with Marriot as its chief. He was instructed to collect the revenue of the district and Messrs Billers and Daczes[3] were associated with him in the work. Within a few days of his arrival at Banaras the Commander-in-Chief waited upon Shah Alam, assured him of the loyalty of the English and gave him hopes of his being put in possession of the Wazir's territory. He invited Rajah Beni Bahadur to a conference at which peace preliminaries were discussed, and it was made clear by Munro that if the Wazir agreed to surrender Mir Qasim, Samru and the French deserters, the other terms would be settled without any difficulty or delay. He endeavoured to win the Rajah over to the English side and to make a friendly settlement with Balwant Singh of Banaras.

4. Beni Bahadur's Negotiations

Anxious to serve the best interests of his master, Beni Bahadur, immediately on his arrival near Banaras, devoted himself to the task of coming into touch with the English with a view to bringing about an accommodation honourable to both the parties, which he believed to be the only solution of the tangle and the only way to perpetuate the ruling dynasty of Awadh.

The Rajah lost no time in re-opening correspondence with Shitab Rai and Munro. He discussed the matter with Suchit Ram, Shitab Rai's *wakil* at Banaras, and requested him to exert all his influence with his master to smooth the way to friendship. The Awadh premier put forth two schemes of peace : Firstly, if the English were desirous of an extension of their territory, they should unite their forces with Shuja-

[1] S. P. D., XXIX. 86.

[2] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 26th November, 1764, Vide Ben. Sec. Cons., Vol. II. 731.

[3] Governor and Council's letter of 6th November, 1764, to the Chief and Council at Patna, Vide Ben. Sec. Cons., II. 664.

ud-daulah's and conquer as much territory as they wanted. The Wazir would help them in their proposed conquest, and he should be allowed to remain in possession of his *subahs*. Secondly, if they had no such ambition, they should enter into a defensive alliance with him and live at peace with their immediate neighbour. In order to give adequate weight to his proposals, he added (what was certainly true) that if the Calcutta Board did not consent to peace, Shuja-ud-daulah would not easily relinquish his hereditary dominion, would prosecute the war afresh and would spend all his riches, stored up in his treasury since the time of his maternal grand-father Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, in its defence. Major Munro replied that the English did not desire Shuja-ud-daulah's country, if he delivered Mir Qasim, Samru and the French deserters into their hands, but if he did not comply with these demands, they would bring the whole of his dominion under their control. "If the Wazir consents to this," he wrote to Beni Bahadur, "we shall make peace with him and evacuate the country. If not, separate yourself from him and in consideration for your friendship for the English, we shall establish you in the *subadarry* in his room, according to the ancient custom."[1] After this correspondence the Rajah met the English commander in a conference at Banaras in the second week of November, and decided to repair to Allahabad to persuade his master to agree to the English demand, promising at the time of leaving that if the Wazir did not make peace, he would leave him and be at the disposal of the King and the English. The Rajah's fear turned out to be true, for the Wazir would not compromise his honour and deliver the refugees. Meanwhile, the Calcutta Council had increased their demands, which now embraced the cession of a part of Shuja-ud-daulah's territory on the ground that the latter by refusing to comply with their terms, had caused the Company heavy expenditure. "In addition therefore to the former demands" they informed Munro, "of the delivering up of Mir

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1 Ben. Sec. Cons., II, 679-81, 715-16; C.P.C., I. 2456, 2475.

Qasim, Sombre and the deserters, we are resolved to insist on the cession of that part of Shuja-ud-dualah's country taking in, on the north side of the Ganga, the city of Banaras, and on the south side, the fort of Chunhargur (Chunargarh) nearly opposite to the same city."[1] For these reasons nothing came out of the negotiations, and both the parties continued their preparations for a fresh contest.

5. Balwant Singh confirmed in the Banaras State

An important problem that called for an immediate solution was the question of the settlement of the Banaras State. With a disaffected and hostile Balwant at the head of fifteen to twenty thousand troops in his rear, Munro rightly considered it risky to begin his campaign against Shuja-ud-daulah and march to Allahabad, and hence his eagerness to enter into an agreement with the Rajah and wean him from the side of the enemy. Balwant Singh was equally eager to seek the protection of the British and to secure their recognition of his *zamindari* on the same terms on which he had hitherto held it from his liege-lord of Awadh. For this purpose the Rajah had sought the mediation of Shitab Rai immediately after the battle of Baksar, and sent his congratulations and a *nazar* (present) of eleven gold mohars to Munro.[2] Then he wrote to Munro that if the English chose to reduce Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion and bring it under their possession, the districts of Banaras, Ghazipur, Jaunpur, and Bijaigarh might be leased out to him on a customary rent of Rs. 170,000 per mensem, and Azamgarh, Gonda and one or two more districts might be added to his charge, and his case was highly recommended to the Governor by Shitab Rai. Anxious to placate the Rajah and convert him into a well-wisher of the Company, the English commander replied that the *sanads* for the districts would be issued in his name and that he would be allowed to hold the territory in question till the conclusion of the negotiations with Shuja-ud-daulah, meaning that he would

1 Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th November, 1764, vide Vol. II. 737-43, 661.

2 C. P. C., I. 2459, 2468 and 2472.

revert to be a vassal of the Nawab-Wazir, if and when a satisfactory settlement could be made between the contending parties. After the arrival of the English army at Banaras, Balwant Singh, although he continued professing loyalty, would not see Munro unless the Major sent him the articles of agreement under his signature and seal.[1]

In fact the Rajah was suspicious, and not without reason, of the intentions of the English commander who had been warned by the Calcutta authorities to have no confidence in Balwant and had even been directed to dispossess him and secure his person, if possible, unless he had already made a treaty with him.[2] Despite these clear instructions the Major considered it expedient to accept the Rajah's demands and sent him a formally signed and sealed agreement to disarm his opposition and convert him into a partisan of the Company, whereupon he agreed to wait on the commander. "It would be very lucky," wrote Munro to the Board, "if Balwant Singh keeps his word and joins us, for if he does not, we cannot move to take Chunar or Allahabad, unless we first defeat and drive him out, which must take time. And there are no important men with force under them who might be set up against him." Munro's fears were not altogether groundless, as the Rajah put off his visit on one pretext or another, and joined the English with a part of his army only after he had satisfied himself that the Emperor was perfectly under their control and there was little likelihood of a peace with the Wazir. The Council approved of the terms of the agreement, but directed the Major to procure from the Emperor a *sanad* of the *zamindari* of Balwant in the name of the Company, so as to have power and authority over the Rajah.[3] As we shall presently see, this was done without delay.

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[1] Letters of Balwant Singh and Shitab Rai in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 21st November, 1764, Vol. II. 716-17, 737-43 ; C. P. C., I. 2476, 2477, 2476 a, 2483.

[2] Ben. Sec. Cons., Vol. II. 661-63.

[3] Ben. Sec. Com's letter to Munro, dated 6th December, 1764, Vol. II. 747.

6. The Settlement with Shah Alam

We have seen that immediately after the Wazir's retreat from Baksar, the Emperor had expressed his willingness to cast in his lot with the British. Major Munro interviewed him at Banaras in order to assure him that the English were firm in their allegiance and would do everything in their power to further his interests. Shah Alam proposed that he be put in possesion of Shuja-ud-daulah's country and a body of English troops be stationed with him for his protection at his expense, agreeing to set apart a portion of the revenue of the said territory for them (English troops). But if, on the other hand, they made peace with the Wazir, he (the Emperor) would march away to Delhi, "for" he added, "I cannot think of returning again into the hands of a man who has used me so ill."[1] Assured of the support of the British, he wrote to Vansittart and the Calcutta Council, Mir Jafar and Shitab Rai, denouncing Shuja-ud-daulah and urging them to lose no time and despatch a powerful force to occupy the Wazir's dominion, advance beyond it and reduce some more territory.[2]

In accordance with the instructions of the Calcutta Council, Munro issued a proclamation declaring the Emperor supreme over Shuja-ud-daulah's provinces.[3] In order to avoid giving umbrage to the other Powers in the country and in order not to embarrass the diplomatic relations in Europe, Munro, obeying the Council's wishes, transacted all political and administrative business, including his correspondence with Indian Chiefs and *zamindars*, in the name of the Mughal Emperor, and made it appear to the Indian as well as the outer world that the English held the acquisitions for Shah Alam. Shuja-ud-daulah was declared a rebel against his sovereign and the war between him and the English as one between him and the Emperor. Munro made Shah Alam write to the

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[1] Tr. of a paper of proposals from the King in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th December, 1764, vide Vol. II. 744.

[2] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th December, 1764, Vol. II. 745; C. P. C. I., 2485-89.

[3] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th December, 1764, Vol. II. 747.

Ruhelas and other important Chiefs not to afford any assistance to the Wazir, as he was in open rebellion against the Crown, and similar letters were sent to the *taluqdars* of Awadh and Allahabad, directing them to drive Shuja-ud-daulah out of the provinces. The Wazir was dismissed from the premier's post, which was now conferred upon the Emperor's younger son, Mirza Akbar Shah.[1] In deference to the wishes of the Calcutta Council, Shah Alam denounced Mir Qasim, Samru and the French deserters from the English camp as outlaws, and himself executed an agreement with the British conferring upon them the districts of Ghazipur, Banaras and other *sarkars* that formed the State of Balwant Singh on the same terms and rights that had been hitherto enjoyed by Shuja-ud-daulah, on the condition that the English would put him in possession of the rest of the Wazir's dominion. The Emperor further agreed to pay the English the expenses of the war from the time of his joining Munro, after he had been put by them in possession of both the *subahs* of the ex-Wazir *minus* the State of Balwant Singh.[2]

7. The First Siege of Chunar ; the Failure of the English

During his three weeks' stay at Banaras, Munro had been maturing his scheme for the conquest of Shuja-ud-daulah's dominion. The Emperor had already cast in his lot with the English, Balwant Singh had been won over, and Beni Bahadur was expected to follow suit. Shah Alam, who brought to the English side enormous moral and political prestige, assured the Major that after Beni Bahadur had joined and the fort-

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[1] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th December, 1764, Vol. II. 749, 737-43 ; Ghulam Ali, II. 210 ; T. M. 249 a ; Khair-ud-din, 151.

[2] Tr. of Shah Alam's *farman*, dated 4th of Rajjab of the 6th year of his reign (29th December, 1764), vide Ben. Sec. Cons. of 7th January, 1765, Vol. III. 8-9 ; Ben. Sec. Cons. of 6th December, 1764, Vol. II. 750-52 ; Letter from President and Council of Fort William to the Court of Directors, dated 3rd January, 1765, vide R. O. J. A., 1765, pp. 1-5.

resses of Chunar and Allahabad been taken, Shuja-ud-daulah's backbone would be broken and he would not have daring enough to make any more attempt at defence, and consequently the whole of his territory would automatically fall into their hands.[1] Munro had been waiting for a supply of stores and provisions from Patna, and as soon as they had been furnished and he had taken other necessary precautions he sent a detachment under Major Pemble consisting of two Grenadier companies of the Bengal European Regiment and three battalions of sepoys to besiege Chunargarh. On the 27th the whole of the invading army encamped in a garden, two miles away from the fort.[2] The fort of Chunar is situated on an isolated rock which forms the termination of the Rajmahal range of mountains. "Its site was a sandstone rock, rising abruptly from the river to the height of 146 feet. The whole area enclosed by a rampart, measured 750 yards in length by 300 in breadth." Leaving some troops at Banaras for the protection of the town and the Emperor, Munro too, with his main army arrived near Chunargarh in 1100 boats on the 29th to reinforce Pemble. Though primarily a soldier, Munro was also a diplomatist of no mean order, and he naturally desired to use diplomacy and threat before having recourse to force. He had easily procured a *farman* from Shah Alam, calling upon Sidi Muhammad Bashir Khan, the commandant of the fort, on pain of imperial displeasure, to deliver it into the hands of the English.[3] Intimidated by the royal threat, Muhammad Bashir wished to submit, but the garrison, being firmly determined to offer a brave defence, turned the *qiladar* out, and quickly completed their arrangements for standing a siege. Sidi Ballal and Sidi Nasir took the command, and two thousand Abyssinians armed with *jizails* and their Indian colleagues began firing the guns arrayed on the ramparts of the fort.

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1 Munro's letter of 22nd November, 1764, already referred to above.

2 Tabsir, 640.

3 Tabsir, 641 ; Sair, II. 767.

The English preparations having been completed, they erected two batteries, one against the south-west angle of the fort, and the other in the east facing the point of the junction of the upper and the lower forts and directed against it. Although fire from these batteries galled the besieged and dropped balls on the fort walls, yet "the work of breaching was very slow". On his arrival Munro erected one battery on the north bank of the Ganga, but it did not prove very serviceable. After great exertion a breach was made in one of the curtains on the south-west angle in the morning of the 2nd December, and Pemble decided to make an assault and storm the breach before the day could dawn on the 3rd. The storming party with the sepoys under Captain Dow in front, followed by cadets and European Grenadiers, reached the foot of the hill at the appointed time. As the sepoys began to mount, the Europeans keeping at a little distance behind them, there was fire from the ramparts, accompanied by huge stones thrown from the towers on either side of the breach. The weight of these massive stones crushed the head of many a sepoy and frightened them so much that in spite of the lead given by Dow and his Sergeant-Major, they grew utterly disheartened and gave up the attempt. Having been badly wounded, Dow himself fell down to the bottom of the steep ascent and his skull was fractured by a large stone. The sergeant was instantly killed.[1] The attempt, therefore, met with a complete failure.

The failure, however, did not damp the spirit of Major Pemble, who decided to renew the attack in the evening of the same day (3rd), and requested Major Munro (who was encamped at some distance north of the Ganga) to send a Grenadier Company for the purpose. The Commander complied by sending 50 rank and file and some volunteers, and a disposition was made for a second attempt. At 2 o'clock early in the morning of 4th December the troops, led by 30 European volunteers of the Pioneer Company and European Grenadiers, moved up the hill to storm the breach. But by

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1 Caraccioli's Life of Lord Clive, Vol. II. p. 64.

this time the garrison had succeeded in repairing the breach under cover of fire from the ramparts, and "a portion of the rock was scarped for several feet, so as to offer a serious obstacle to any approach, much of the rubbish was removed, and fresh heaps of stones were collected on the summit." The storming party advanced boldly, but were received with showers of stones and balls, and were hurled down together like a confused mass. "....I am sorry to inform you," wrote Major Munro to the President and Council at Fort William, "that the volunteers were struck with such a panic that they ran back after being at the breach upon the Grenadier Company, and they upon the rest who were to support them, so that all gave way and were seized with such a panic that the officers could not get them to rally, though the fire from the fort was not very heavy ; nor did those within throw down near the quantity of stones which they did the day before." The result was appalling. Many European troops were killed, many were so grievously wounded as to be disabled for life and the remaining retreated in great confusion and alarm. The second attempt thus proved to be as complete a failure as the first, and the loss suffered by the besiegers was tremendous. Some 50 European troops and 1,000 sepoys were slain and wounded.[1]

Meanwhile Munro, having received reports of Shuja-ud-daulah's start from Allahabad and his arrival within 17 *kos* of Chunar, felt apprehensive lest he should take the bold step of falling on the back of the besiegers, get into the English rear and cut off their communication, or make an attempt to carry away the Emperor, whose presence in Munro's camp had given an accession of political and moral strength to the English and branded the Wazir as a rebel in the eyes of the Indian public. Hence, on 6th December, 1764, Munro and Pemble broke up camp and retired to Banaras, where they arrived on the 7th.[2]

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1 Munro's letter to Governor and Council, dated 4th December, 1764, in Ben. Sec. Cons. of 17th December, 1764, vide Vol. II. 768-70 ; Tabsir, 642.

2 Ben. Sec. Cons. of 27th December, 1764, Vol. II. 782 ; Ben.

8. Shuja-ud-daulah reopens Negotiations

The Banaras conference between Beni Bahadur and Munro had proved futile owing to the English insistence on the surrender of Mir Qasim and others; Shuja-ud-daulah now reopened negotiations through Shitab Rai. He made overtures through Major Carnac and not through Munro. Beni Bahadur, who had from the very beginning been in favour of friendship with the Calcutta authorities, for which he had been charged with disloyalty to his master, informed Carnac that he had been invested by the Wazir with full powers to negotiate a treaty and requested him to persuade the Governor and his Council to entertain the proposal.[1] Meanwhile, Shuja-ud-daulah learnt that John Spencer had succeeded Vansittart, and therefore he expressed his pleasure at the latter's elevation to the Governor's office and repeated what he had already written to Carnac, adding that if a treaty were made with him, he would faithfully abide by its terms.[2] He appealed to Mir Jafar to show a conciliatory spirit so that the quarrel that had been *caused by the influence of the stars* might come to an end.[3] Shitab Rai, who acted as an intermediary between the parties, forwarded these letters to Calcutta and urged the settlement of the dispute.[4] The Governor expressed surprise that the Wazir had not made the overture through Major Munro, and his only reply to all these letters was to ask how he could return a satisfactory answer when the Wazir had evaded consideration of their preliminary and original demands and when on the one hand he was suing for peace and, on the other hand, he was again ready for a war.[5]

President and Council's letter to the Court of Directors, dated 3rd January, 1765, vide I. O. R. of 1765, pp. 1-5; Williams, 54; Broome, I. 490; Innes, 215; Tabsir (very accurate in dates and facts), pp. 641-43; Sair, II. 767-68 (speaks of only one attempt); Khair-ud-din, 138-39.

1 C. P. C., I. 2517.

2 *Ibid*, 2518.

3 *Ibid*, 2521.

4 *Ibid*, 2519-2520.

5 *Ibid*, 2525-2529.

Shuja-ud-daulah accordingly wrote to the Commander-in-Chief (Munro) requesting that Captain Stables be sent to treat with him.[1] But the Major returned the answer that if he promised to deliver up Mir Qasim, Samru and the French deserters, then Stables would be sent, and if not, so long as one Englishman was alive, he would not desist from war. He warned the Wazir not to write any more letters, if he had no desire of complying with their original demands, otherwise they would be ignored.[2] This curt answer does not seem to have filled the Wazir with despair, for he urged Shitab Rai once more to do his best to bring about a settlement. The Rai once again recommended to the Governor to waive his demands and come to terms with the Wazir, who was not wilfully evading compliance, but it was in fact beyond his strength to comply. Samru being a master of legions, added the Rai, it was impossible for the Wazir to apprehend him; the French deserters were no longer in his service, and as for Mir Qasim, it would be inconsistent with the Wazir's honour and humanity to lay hands on one who had once sought his shelter. Probably because of Shitab Rai's recommendation, Captain Stables was now despatched to see the Wazir, and as a result of the conference Shuja-ud-daulah agreed to withdraw his protection from Mr. Qasim, Samru and the French deserters, and to assist the English army in capturing them.[3] After Stables' departure the Wazir wrote a letter to Munro :—"If the English will now enter into friendship with me, I will immediately dismiss their enemies and withdraw my protection from them, and this friendship being confirmed, I will join with the English army in endeavouring to take them wherever they are to be found. I mean no equivocation in what I now write, for the truth of which I take God and His Holy Prophet to witness."[4] Dated 3rd January, 1765.

[1] C. P. C., I. 2530.
[2] *Ibid*, 2531.
[3] *Ibid*, 2535,
[4] Tr. of Shuja-ud-daulah's letter to Munro, dated 3rd January, 1765, vide Ben. Cons. of 17th January, 1765, Vol. III. pp. 11-12.

Major Munro sent the following reply the same day:— "I am informed by Captain Stables of the particulars of the conference between you and him, and he likewise delivered me your letter, the contents of which I am made acquainted with, but they do not correspond with my demands, nor is the letter itself such that I can send it to Calcutta. If you will write me another letter, the whole of it in your own hand-writing, offering to make peace with the English and to deliver up to them Qasim, Sombre and the deserters that are with you, you will do right. In that case I will forward your letter to the Hon'ble the President and Council at Calcutta for their perusal and you may expect a satisfactory answer, and then terms of peace will not be refused (to) you."[1]

For the first time the Fort William authorities were now impressed by Shuja-ud-daulah's earnest desire and recommended that negotiations should be continued. But besides their original demands as a condition precedent to peace, a great obstacle in the way of a friendly settlement was the engagement the English had entered into with Shah Alam whereby they had pledged themselves to put him in possession of the Wazir's dominion, and the Council, therefore, while directing Munro on 17th January, 1765, to continue negotiations, advised him that nothing should be done to give the Emperor cause for suspicion that anything would be done contrary to his interest. The Calcutta Board wrote that the latest correspondence showed "that he (Shuja-ud-daulah) was more earnest in his offers for peace than he had ever before appeared. This is a measure we should some time ago have noticed to see take place, but as through his obstinacy we have now entered into engagements with the King, no accommodation can take place without a due regard to the interest of His Majesty and those engagements, and previous to all, the absolute delivery into our hands of Mir Qasim, Sombre and our deserters."[2]

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1 Munro's reply to the Wazir, dated 3rd Januray, 1765, in Ben. Sec. Cons., Vol. III. 12-13.

2 Ben. Sec. Cons. of 17th January, 1765, vide Vol. III. 14-15.

9. Confusion in Awadh and Allahabad

The peace negotiations did not in any way hamper the warlike preparations and destructive activities of the two parties. Shuja-ud-daulah would not allow his *subahs* to be occupied without a final, and if possible, deadly struggle, while the English believed that the best way to force the Wazir to surrender Mir Qasim and their other enemies was to drive him out of his dominion. In pursuance of this policy, Munro made the Emperor write to the Wazir's two great enemies, Mirza Najaf Khan and Ahmad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad, investing the one with the management of the *subah* of Awadh and the other with that of the Allahabad province. All the important chiefs in the two provinces were directed by the Emperor to afford no shelter to the rebel Wazir, but to drive him out without delay. Many of the powerful and turbulent landlords, taking advantage of Shuja-ud-daulah's prolonged absence in Bihar, had already been in open rebellion. Balbhadra Singh of Tiloi, always quick in making the fullest use of the Nawab-Wazir's embarrassment, unceremoniously turned out the Nawabi officers from the *parganahs* of Jagdishpur and Parshadipur and temporarily attained the semi-independent status of his ancestors. Amar Singh of the younger branch of Amethi (Pukhra Ansari) waited till the issue of Baksar had become generally known, and then he boldly asserted his independence. Many other influential potentates followed suit. Immediately after the result of Baksar had been noised abroad, Shuja-ud-daulah's government of his capital city of Faizabad was overthrown, the *kotwal* was beaten and the State flag was torn down by some of those very faithless men who had been the loudest in their professions of loyalty and friendliness to the Wazir. Most of his troops and commanders turned their faces against him.[1] So completely was Shuja-ud-daulah engrossed by the thought of taking revenge and of driving the English out of that part of his territory

Munro's letter to Calcutta Board, dated Camp at Banaras, 22nd November, 1764, vide Ben. Sec. Cons., Vol. II. 737-43; W. C. Benett's A. R. on F. H. R. D., p. 42 ; Imad, 95.

which had been occupied by them, that even after his retreat to Allahabad he made little endeavour to allay the disturbance that was rampant in his dominion. Only one or two chiefs, like Balbhadra Singh of Tiloi,[1] were either forced to submit or won over by friendly treatment.

10. Shuja-ud-daulah marches against Banaras

During his stay at Allahabad Shuja-ud-daulah "fell ill of vexation at having lost that battle (Baksar)", and his only thought was to re-assemble his army and have another trial of strength. But his troops had completely lost heart and were extremely reluctant to fight. After some difficulty he, however, got together a sufficiently big army, which was now joined by some of the Awadh chiefs, and when the preparations were complete, he sent his family, dependants and treasure to Lucknow, and then some time in December started towards Banaras to renew the struggle. His object was to hasten to Banaras and capture it by a *coup*,[2] while the main body of the English army was lying some miles away before the walls of Chunargarh. But Munro was well-served by his spies, and as soon as he was in receipt of the intelligence that Shuja-ud-daulah had left Allahabad and was within 17 *kos* of Chunar, he raised the siege and returned to Banaras to save the town from a surprise attack. In view of the altered circumstances, the Wazir (whose army was much inferior to that of the enemy, now strengthened by the adhesion of the Emperor and Balwant Singh and by desertions from the Awadh force after the disaster of Baksar), wisely decided to avoid a general engagement in favour of guerilla tactics, cutting off the communications and stopping the supplies of the English. Accordingly, he left his heavy baggage and artillery near Jaunpur, and marching rapidly to near Banaras with his cavalry and light guns, arrived near the British camp and continued hovering round it.[3]

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1 He was present with Shuja-ud-daulah in the battle of Jaunpur on 19th January, 1765; Tabsir, 644.
2 Memoirs of Madec, Part II, 1-2; Tabsir, 643.
3 Khair-ud-din, 143; I. O. R., 1765, pp. 1-5.

Meanwhile, Major Munro handed over his command to Major Robert Fletcher on 6th January, 1765, and left for Calcutta pending the arrival of John Carnac, re-appointed Commander-in-Chief with the rank of Colonel and the title of Brigadier-General (on 20th Dec., 1764). Anxious to take the fullest advantage of the change, Shuja-ud-daulah rapidly advanced in the second week of January, 1765, to the north of Shivpur, 5 miles north-west of Banaras, and posting several divisions of his army at several places, threatened that town from more than one direction. Marriot, the chief of the recently established English factory at the holy city, considering the town unsafe, evacuated it and took up his residence in the camp with the army. Balwant Singh, leaving the English army, first hastened to the defence of one of his places besieged by the Wazir's troops, and then retired to his stronghold of Latifgarh,[1] and some wavering was visible among the Indian partisans of the Company. But the new acting commander displayed great vigour and activity, and as soon as he learnt that Shuja-ud-daulah was encamped 7 *kos* from the English army and Samru 11 *kos*, Robert Fletcher made the necessary disposition of his troops and resolved to make a surprise attack on the enemy during the night of 14th January. He began his march at 11 in the night, but his project of a night attack was frustrated owing to the intervention of a dry *nala* on the way, which could not be crossed before daybreak. Next day (15th) the British force encamped at Shahpur,[2] keeping itself in readiness to bring the enemy to a general engagement, should he appear in the vicinity of their camp.

11. The Fall of Jaunpur and the Flight of the Wazir to Lucknow

By this time Shuja-ud-daulah's army in several columns had arrived within a short distance of the English camp; but being inferior in number, the Wazir adopted the clever tactics

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1 Ben. Sec. Cons., Vol. III. p. 36, 43-44; C. P. C., I. 2555; Khair-ud-din, 143.

2 Ben. Sec. Cons., Vol. III. 41-42.

of annoying the British with his swift cavalry attacks, in which arm he had some advantage over them. But Major Fletcher knew how to meet the situation. Before the Wazir could have an opportunity of cutting off the English supplies, Fletcher assumed the offensive and marched forward with his cavalry and artillery and six field-pieces to force the enemy to a pitched battle or chase him out of the country. In the morning of the 18th he attacked Shuja-ud-daulah and put his troops to flight. Deserted by most of his faithless mercenaries, the Wazir stood almost alone, surveying the scene with bewildered eyes and making a desperate effort to rally his fleeing men. But they would not listen, and Shuja-ud-daulah, on the advice of the self-same sycophants who had some days back urged the renewal of hostilities and offered their wholehearted co-operation, quitted the field.[1] "Here", writes Madec, "soldiers who are once beaten lose heart entirely.... The Nawab nevertheless made one more effort for delivering a second battle. We left Allahabad for that object, and after many days of marching the two armies came face to face. But after the first effort terror seized our army and the Nawab retreated in disorder on seeing himself abandoned by his men..." In fact he was betrayed by his faithless Mughals who wanted to deliver him up to the English. Two of the prominent Mughal deserters were Abdul Rahim Khan and Muhammad Ali Khan who had some time before been sent by the Wazir to negotiate peace with the English commander at Banaras. These two Mughal commanders offered to place themselves with 6000 troops at the disposal of Major Fletcher very soon after the battle of 18th January.[2]

Shuja-ud-daulah now retreated to Jalalpur, 6 miles north-

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1 Khair-ud-din, 143-44.

2 Memoirs of Madec, part II. p. 2; Gentil, 240; Tabsir, 643-44; C. P. C., I. 2557, 2258 and 2588; Imad, 95. Most of the Persian authorities (such as Haricharan, p. 462) say that 2 or 3 Englishmen fell into the hands of the Wazir before the panic of Jaunpur. Imad, pp. 95-96 seems to mean that it happened at Baksar. However, the statement is not supported by the sources in English. Ben. Sec. Cons. of 4th February, 1765, Vol. III. 75-77.

west of Banaras, where Samru had taken up his post, and Major Fletcher, continuing his pursuit, arrived within a mile of the Wazir the same evening (19th). The fatigue of their troops and the presence of a deep *nala* between the opposing forces prevented the English from pushing on to the attack, and Fletcher consequently decided to surprise the enemy before the next daybreak. At 8 o'clock in the night (19th), however, reports reached the British commander that the enemies were sending away their baggage, no doubt as preparatory to retiring from the field, and accordingly he made up his mind to order an immediate advance of his troops so as to overtake Shuja-ud-daulah. But owing to the advice given him by some of his principal officers, Fletcher was obliged to defer the march to the next morning. Shuja, taking advantage of this delay, retreated some distance away at midnight. Next morning (20th January) the English crossed the *nala* with 80 Europeans, five battalions of sepoys and six field-pieces and proceeded in pursuit of the retreating enemy. Somewhere south of the town of Jaunpur, Shuja-ud-daulah arranged his men in battle order, but as Fletcher with his lines regularly drawn up appeared in front, he with Samru "retired under cover of a great number of artillery", writes the English commander, "and we were at last obliged to leave the hunt and encamp owing to the artillery bullocks being so very bad that they could draw the guns no further." We are informed by the historian Khair-ud-din of Allahabad that Samru's regiment was not for giving way, but the Wazir insisted on his quitting the field along with himself, and then this foreign commander, keeping his troops and artillery like a fort to protect the Wazir within it, retreated towards Jaunpur, fighting the enemy all the way. Near a bridge on the Gomti in the vicinity of Jaunpur, the Wazir was almost overtaken by some English troops who fired a volley at his small escort, but the vigilant Samru was able to save him, and the two fled in precipitation towards Faizabad. Shuja-ud-daulah, we are told by Fletcher, did not dismount from his elephant till he was seven *kos* away from the pursuing British. His luggage, left in charge of Samru and Balbhadra

Singh of Tiloi and following most leisurely behind, was plundered and taken possession of by the victors.[1] The English army quickly marched to Janupur and took possession of the town and the fort on the 20th, after a feeble resistance made by the Wazir's musketry. "I am now in possession", writes Major Fletcher on 21st January, 1765, "of the city and strong fortress of Jaunpur, where I shall leave a garrison when I quit it. The bridge over the Gumpty (Gomti) here is the finest in Indostan, and the city I am told larger than Benares."

The immediate problem was the reduction of the important forts of Allahabad and Chunar, and Major Fletcher now directed his attention to them.

12. The Surrender of Allahabad Fort

Just after the fall of Jaunpur, Major Fletcher planned expeditions against Chunar and Allahabad. But before coming to extremities with the garrisons in the two fortresses, he tried the arts of persuasion and diplomacy with a view to attaining his object without exertion and bloodshed. He requested the Emperor, then encamped at Banaras, to address royal *farmans* to Ghulam Husain Khan, *qiladar* of Allahabad and Sidi Muhammad Bashir Khan, commandant of Chunar, calling upon them to deliver the forts to the English troops as soon as the latter arrived at their respective towns. The Emperor was further requested to march to Chunar in person to exert pressure on the garrison. Shah Alam gladly and promptly complied with the former request, and as for the latter, he promised that either he would personally proceed to join the army at Chunar or send his Mir Atish Nawab Bairam Khan. In obedience to the imperial summons and Major Munro's letters of invitation, Mirza Najaf Khan was already on his way to the English camp from Bundelkhand, where he had taken up service after Mir Qasim's expulsion from Bengal, and he was now requested by Fletcher to proceed to Allahabad immediately and collect all the boats available to enable the English

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[1] Khair-ud-din, 144 ; Tabsir, 644 ; C. P. C., I. 2569.
[2] Ben. Sec. Cons. of 4th February, 1765, Vol. III. 75-77.

army to cross the Ganga, promising that he would follow soon and put the Mirza in possession of the fort. After these preliminaries had been arranged, Fletcher despatched Major Stibbert, on 22nd and 23rd January, with half of his field train, 300 Europeans and two battalions of sepoys to besiege Chunar, and Captain Gailliez was directed to march to that place with stores, supplies of corn and other materials. This done, the commander left one and a half battalions of sepoys for the protection of Banaras and one battalion with the Emperor, and then himself with the bulk of the English army commenced his march towards Allahabad on the 24th, and arrived in the close vicinity of the fort on the 30th, and was joined by Najaf Khan. As the English policy was one of absolute non-interference with the people and as their march was not accompanied by plunder and devastation, (the reverse of which was the case with an Indian army of the 18th century) no opposition of any kind was shown to them, and in their journey from Banaras to Allahabad the Engligh army experienced no difficulty for provisions, large quantities being supplied to them in almost every village, chiefly in those between Jaunpur and Allahabad.[1] Ali Beg Khan, deputy governor of Allahabad and Ghulam Husain Khan, the commandant of the fort, had already shut themselves up within its walls and refused to surrender and comply with the imperial orders. In like manner the commandant ignored the peremptory letter of Major Fletcher, dated 27th January, commanding in the name of Shah Alam (in whose service, wrote the Major, he was now fighting), to deliver the fort and threatening Ghulam Husain Khan and his people with certain death in the event of non-compliance.[2]

Having approached Allahabad, the English made an attempt to cross the Ganga and reach that side of the fort. But the *qiladar* showered such a heavy fire from the guns arranged on the ramparts that none dared approach the river bank. Within a few days, however, some Englishmen, having suc-

[1] C. P. C., I. 2555, 2556, 2569, 2570, 2573 ; Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 77-78, 127.

[2] C. P. C., I. 2576.

ceeded in going over to the other side at some distance away from the fort, captured a number of boats and the whole army crossed over without any resistance. At this the town of Allahabad was filled with consternation. The horror and misery of the Bangash sack and plunder of 1751 being green in their memory, wealthy and respectable people began to flee away to places of safety, and some of them took shelter in Shaikh Afzal's school, situated in the centre of the new town, which had luckily escaped the catastrophe of 1751. A number of old and respectable citizens, headed by Shah Ghulam Qutb-ud-din, repaired to the British camp and waited on Major Fletcher to beg quarter for the residents of Allahabad, and on being assured by the commander that he had not come to plunder or molest the people, they returned joyfully to their homes.[1]

Now the garrison too betrayed signs of wavering and fear, and on 30th January asked for safety of themselves, their families and effects, and begged permission to retire to Lucknow, all of which terms were readily promised by the British commander. But having soon discovered that the English battering cannon had not yet arrived, they evaded surrender on the pretext that the arrears of the salaries of the garrison which amounted to two lakhs of rupees should be cleared off first. After about five days' waiting for the arrival of the guns that were ordered from Banaras by water, operations were commenced in right earnest. The besiegers dug three mines in three different places, the nearest being within 30 yards of the fort wall, and erected a battery near the deserted houses of the old city for 2 field twelve-pounders against a weak part of the northern wall at a distance of 70 yards. This work was done under the immediate guidance of Mirza Najaf Khan, who had arrived at Allahabad soon after the British army and had brought with him 4000 troops.[2] Fully acquainted with every nook and corner of the fort, in

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[1] Khair-ud-din, 147-48.

[2] Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 127-129. Let. to C. D., 1765, p. 36.

which he had for years resided during the governorship of his patron and relation Muhammad Quli Khan alias Mirza Kochak, he pointed out the vulnerable parts of its walls. The garrison, however, which numbered about 2,000 troops and possessed 150 pieces of cannon, displayed courage and put up a brave resistance. But a few hours' constant firing from the English battery effected a breach "at the only weak point of the wall", and the besieged having no hope of receiving reinforcement from any quarter, naturally grew despondent and listened to the proposals of peace. Through the mediation of Najaf Khan the garrison surrenderad at discretion in the afternoon of 8th February, 1765, a few hours before the English battering cannon had reached Allahabad from Banaras. Ali Beg Khan, Ghulam Husain Khan and many of the garrison sought permission to go and join the Wazir, which given without difficulty, and the fort was occupied by the British who stationed a garrison therein. In the fighting the besieged had lost 7 men killed and 7 wounded, while on the English side two Europeans and 6 sepoys were wounded and one sepoy, one sergeant, and five European privates were killed.[1]

13. The Acquisition of Chunargarh

It has already been related that Major Stibbert, with a powerful body of European and Indian troops and a good park of artillery including some heavy battering cannon, had been sent to besiege Chunargarh. In response to Major Fletcher's request, Shah Alam with his army, together with a contingent of Balwant Singh's troops under the Rajah's brother's son named Samir Singh, arrived and joined the English under the walls of the fort. But Sidi Muhammad Ballal the commandant, disregarding the imperial orders and Fletcher's threats, had already disdainfully refused to surrender the fort and replied to the British Commander-in-Chief that he had always acted as a faithful servant wherever he had served and that he would not be intimidated by threats. Peaceful acquisition being out of the question, Stibbert made an early arrange-

[1] Tabsir, 645 ; Khair-ud-din, 146-50 ; Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 158-159.

ment for commencing operations by erecting three batteries against the walls under the supervision of Captain Winwood. The garrison numbering about 3,000 fighting men,[1] defended the fort with great bravery and courage. The besiegers, however, anxious to avoid the mistakes of the first siege, concentrated all their efforts on the weakest spots in the walls and succeeded in making "two breaches in the upper work, from two batteries, and another in the lower work which defended the outer gate. . . ." This dismayed the garrison, who were growing increasingly nervous at the rumours of the Wazir's flight from Lucknow and his evacuation of the whole dominion, as well as at the grim prospect of starvation, as there remained only about 15 days' provisions in the fort, and consequently they lent a ready ear to the overtures of peace made by Nawab Bairam Khan, head of the imperial artillery, and by Faizullah Khan Mir Bakhshi. The garrison were promised protection of their lives and property, and as the negotiations reached the final stage before the besiegers could assault, Sidi Ballal *qiladar* surrendered the fort in the morning of 8th February,[2] 1765, the same day that Allahabad surrendered to Fletcher. "This gallant old soldier," writes Broome, "who had so ably resisted the former attack, would not readily have given up now without a struggle, notwithstanding the desperate state of affairs, had he not been compelled to do so by the mutinous conduct of the garrison, who being greatly in arrears of pay and in extreme distress for provisions, refused to hold out any longer or to serve a master who had fled and left them to perish by famine or the sword." The brave Sidi Ballal, handing over the keys of the fort to Stibbert, said with tears in his eyes, "I have endeavoured to act like a soldier ; but being deserted by my Prince, and with a mutinous garrison, what could I do ?" Touched by his gallantry and his time-honoured grey hair, Major Stibbert and all his officers paid him every compliment, and granted honourable terms to the garrison, a large portion of which enlisted in the Company's service. During

[1] C. P. C., I. 2569, 2583, 2585, &c.
[2] Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 130-131 ; Tabsir, p. 644.

the siege the English loss was one sergeant, two sepoys and two laskars killed, and one gunner, one sepoy and two laskars wounded. After the keys had been surrendered, as many of the garrison as liked were permitted to march away with their private property.[1]

14. The Collapse of the Wazir's Power and his Flight to Ruhelkhand

Immediately after his failure in the skirmish at Jalalpur, Shuja-ud-daulah, deserted by his ungrateful Mughals, especially by the two brothers Abdul Rahim and Muhammad Ali Khan who eventually entered the Company's service, retreated precipitately and in disorder towards Lucknow with his infantry that still remained faithful to him. Beni Bahadur, Madec and some other officers of note fell back in order, but, all lost most of their equipage, which was plundered by Shuja-ud-daulah's own subjects. "The peasants," writes, Madec, "profited by this rout and plundered also and did the greatest injury. I lost only a little." At Lucknow Beni Bahadur and some other officers such as Samru, who was still master of 10 to 12 thousand troops, Anup Giri Gosain, Ali Beg Khan, Shitab Jang and Agha Baqir (the last two were Mughals) re-joined the Wazir, who took measures for saving himself and his family,[2] and leaving the Rajah there with instructions to maintain order with the few troops in his service and to make an endeavour for a peace with the English, he started towards Ruhelkhand with his women and treasures on 31st January, 1765 (8th Shaban, 1178). Lucknow was filled with confusion and alarm, and wealthy citizens who had everything to fear from a revolution and change of government, began to flee to places of safety. The historian Haricharan Das's employers and patrons, Khanam Sahiba, the widow of Nawab Qasim Ali Khan, and her relation, the widow of Ishaq Khan Najm-ud-daulah, packed up their luggage and with their dependants and jewels hastened towards the Ruhela country.

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1 Broome, Vol. I. 506 ; Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 158.

2 Tabsir, 643-45 ; Gentil, 240 ; Madec's Memoirs, part II. p. 2 ; Haricharan, 462a & b.

During this time the English had pushed on beyond Jaunpur, subjected a large part of the Wazir's country to their domination, laid siege to Chunar and Allahabad and invited many a vassal of Shuja-ud-daulah, such as Rajah Muhammad Azam Khan of Azamgarh and Beni Bahadur to desert their master and enter the Company's service. The response was by no means discouraging. Fatah Ali Khan, an important officer in the Wazir's army, who had once served Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul and abandoned the Awadh ruler after the disgraceful panic of Jaunpur, offered through the mediation of some Muslim partisans of the Company to place the services of himself and his 2000 horse and 1000 foot at the disposal of Major Fletcher[1], and the latter was only too glad to accept them. On 1st February, 1765, he wrote to many other commanders of Shuja-ud-daulah, such as Muhammad Baqir Khan, Ibrahim Khan, Mirza Rahim Khan, Sulaiman Beg Khan, Bicham Beg Khan, Mir Muhammad Ali Khan and Sayyid Muhammad Khan, who had callously abandoned the Wazir at a critical time and were now encamped at Faizabad with more than 6000 troops, assuring them of English protection and desiring them to join Najaf Khan who was proceeding to Allahabad, with a view to co-operate with Fletcher in the reduction of the fort and the province. The English, of course, would not entertain in their service all the deserting Mughals, for their number was very large indeed, but Major Fletcher promised British protection to such of them as could not be enrolled in the Company's army and encouraged them to join Najaf Khan.[2]

The fall of Allahabad and Chunar proved to be a signal for a general desertion of Shuja-ud-daulah's troops. The Wazir was now a fugitive, flying for protection and attended by a handful of men only, and on 14th February, the Commander-in-Chief wrote to the President and Council that Shuja-ud-daulah's forces had been dispersed, that he and Samru had retreated 60 miles away from Lucknow and were still retreat-

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1. Haricharan, 642b; C. P. C., I. 2572, 2574, 2557-58.
2. C. P. C., I. 2580-89.

ting, that several of the Wazir's officers had applied to him for service and were awaiting the Council's orders, and that so completely was the Wazir's power broken that 300 Europeans and 4 battalions of sepoys and a few cannon were more than enough to beat any force that he could bring.[1]

15. The English occupy Awadh and Allahabad

Even before the fall of Chunar and Allahabad the English had endeavoured to settle the country that had already come into their hands and to bring the rest of the Wazir's dominion under their control by winning over many of his revenue and police officers and confirming them in their posts and offices on behalf of the Company. This policy of recognising the old Nawabi officers and landlords in their respective jurisdictions proved an eminently practical and sound device for acquiring the two provinces without much military exertion, and speaks well of the political sagacity and diplomatic skill of the Company's writers, factors and soldiers, whose attention had been hitherto divided between commercial business and the defence of their factories and trading rights and who had hardly had any opportunity of trying their wits on the administration of the land. They had already made Balwant Singh their partisan by entering into an agreement and confirming him in the State of Banaras on an annual payment of Rs. 20,86,607. At the request of Major Fletcher the Emperor had written to Nazr Ali Khan, *faujdar* of the Faizabad Haveli and district, confirming him in his post on his behalf and directing him to quiet the apprehensions of the people and keep the district in his possession, and the Major did the same on behalf of the Company. An agreement was entered into with Rajah Muhammad Azam Khan of Azamgarh, and he seems to have cast in his lot with the English. Most of the other chiefs in the two provinces transferred their allegiance to the victors.[2] The fall of the Allahabad and Chunar fortresses reputed to be very strong, damped the spirit of

[1] Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 168.
[2] C. P. C., I. 2560-2561, 2575-82.

the fugitive Wazir's friends and almost the whole of the two *subahs* submitted without any further resistance.

Meanwhile, Colonel Carnac, the Commander-in-Chief-designate, arrived and assumed command of the army at Chunar on 13th February, 1765. Leaving a suitable garrison in the fort, he marched to Allahabad where he stayed on for some days to make proper arrangements for the administration of the province and of Akbar's fort at the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna. The Emperor took up his residence in the fort and was proclaimed as being in possession of the whole of the dominion of Shuja-ud-daulah. On 5th March, Carnac despatched a body of his troops to march to Lucknow and occupy it, while he himself with the main army proceeded towards Faizabad a few days later. As the Emperor and some other notable people did not consider Najaf Khan a suitable man to be entrusted with the *subahdari* of Awadh and Allahabad and as Ahmad Khan Bangash who had been invited by Shah Alam and Major Munro to occupy Allahabad as its governor had evaded accepting the office, Carnac threw that tempting bait before Beni Bahadur on the condition that he placed his services at the disposal of the British. The Rajah succumbed to the temptation and joined[1] the Commander-in-Chief on 9th March with all his troops, whose number was considerably large, and on the 11th the General again recommended to the Governor and Council the ex-Premier of Awadh as the most proper person on whom the *subahdari* of that province could be bestowed "for reaping the most from it", especially because of his long experience of the work and of his friendship with Shitab Rai who was so much attached to the English cause. On the 17th he informed the Fort William authorities "that Beni Bahadur having brought in all his troops which are pretty considerable, there no longer remains any enemy in the provinces" and therefore only a small body of sepoys was enough to occupy Lucknow. At a meeting held on 1st April the Calcutta Board approved of Carnac's proposal

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[1] Ben. Sec. Cons., III, 232-35.

of appointing Beni Bahadur to Awadh and recommended that both the provinces should be put in charge of one man "to prevent the ill-consequences from two separate interests in them". "But that", they added, "since Beni Bahadur, who before had a principal share in the government of Oude and must of course have great influence in that province, has come over to us with a large body of troops and is willing to give us such a proof of his attachment to our cause as the leaving of his family at Benares, we shall not object to the King's nomination in his favour. But at the same time (we) desire he (Carnac) will engage him to give us without delay the proposed security." It seems that Beni Bahadur had not yet been informed of the form of security that the English wanted, and when he learnt that he would have to leave his women as hostages, he took leave of Carnac on 25th March on the pretext of going to Lucknow to bring his family from there to Banaras, leaving his *diwan* and most of his troops in the English camp,[1] and went off to join Shuja-ud-daulah. Shitab Rai, who had been the intermediary between Beni Bahadur and Carnac, regretted his friend's defection and as he had stood surety for Beni Bahadur's conduct, he told the General that he should be the object of the Council's censure and not the Commander-in-Chief.

Finding his master a fugitive, Beni Bahadur, like most shrewd men, desired to ensure his rank and power and hence he cast in his lot with the English ; but when he learnt that the Wazir was sure to make another attempt to recover his dominion and this time with the help of the Ruhelas and the Marathas, he thought it prudent not to antagonise his ex-master. And above all, as the English commander was insisting on the Rajah's placing his family as hostages in Banaras, which he would not like to do, he decided to flee away from Colonel Carnac's camp and rejoin the Wazir.

Beni Bahadur's sudden defection caused grave doubts about the fidelity of Balwant Singh.

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1 Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 273, 284-86, 298. Kalyan, 148b ; Sair, II. 766-67 ; Khair-ud-din, 151.

16. The English attempt to settle Awadh and Allahabad

Almost simultaneously with the news of Beni Bahadur's defection, General Carnac learnt that the detachment he had sent had occupied Lucknow "without obstruction" in the third week of March. The Commander-in-Chief, who seems to have been already on the march, turned towards Faizabad on the 26th to reduce some of the *zamindars* who had proved refractory and to settle the conquered country and make it pay for the expenses of the campaign. As the British policy aimed at conciliating the people of the subject provinces, molestation and plunder of the villagers had been strictly prohibited, and little difficulty was experienced in the work of reduction and settlement and practically[1] the whole of the Wazir's dominions submitted without any opposition from the people. Contemporary Persian and Marathi sources speak in appreciative terms of the honesty and humanity of the foreign conquerers. Haricharan Das, author of the celebrated *Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai* and a partisan of Shuja-ud-daulah, writes that when the English advanced to Lucknow and brought the villages and towns of the *subahs* of Awadh and Allahabad under their domination, they did not at all oppress the people, did not in any way interfere with their (private) affairs, and even when some mischief-mongers gave them a clue to the wealth and property of rich citizens and merchants, with the insinuation that these persons should be laid under contribution, those God-fearing people (i.e., the English), abhorrent of oppression and tyranny, reprimanded the informants and warned them against bringing such information to their notice in future. They strictly enjoined upon their sepoys and followers not to practise oppression on anybody. Some of the Maratha officers in the north were equally impressed by English honesty and fidelity to their word and treaty engagements.[2] These virtues in the character of the British statesmen of the 18th century were responsible, as much

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[1] For example, a rebellion of some *zamindars* in the Sitapur district.

[2] Haricharan, 466a; S. P. D., XXIX. L. 192.

as their military superiority, for the submission of the people of Awadh and Allahabad without resistance.

The work of the settlement of the two provinces was now taken up in right earnest, and during the next two or three months much was done, though not without difficulty. The English being ignorant of the work of Indian administration, especially of the theory and practice of the complicated revenue system, it fell on the shoulders of Najaf Khan and more particularly on those of Rajah Shitab Rai. The Rajah appointed able and experienced revenue officers, chosen from among the old collectors of Shuja-ud-daulah. In order to win over able servants of the Nawabi government, he invited such old and experienced officers of Shuja-ud-daulah as Haidar Beg Khan and his brother Nur Beg, confirmed them in their respective offices, and through them not only established a new order, but also managed to collect some revenue from the provinces. "True it is," writes the historian Ghulam Husain Khan, "that despite Shuja-ud-daulah's long-established administration for a period of fifty years since the time of his maternal grandfather Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-mulk, Shitab Rai succeeded in undermining it. In most parts he re-established order and did good work." But the whole territory was not fully pacified and the loyalty of some of the chiefs and *zamindars* was open to suspicion.[1]

While this work was proceeding slowly, Brigadier-General Carnac had marched to Faizabad and taken up his residence in the Wazir's palace. He spent some days in re-organising the civil administration that had been overthrown on Shuja-ud-daulah's flight to Ruhelkhand and transacting some political business. He held *darbars* in the typical oriental style, played the Nawab and received the submission of many a baron of Awadh.[2] He was still lying in the capital city when disquieting reports were brought that Shuja-ud-daulah, having formed an alliance with the old Maratha chief Malhar Rao

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1 Sair, II. 768 ; Kalyan, 149a.
2 Broome, 512 ; Forest's *Clive*, II. 274.

Holkar, was about to enter Kora with a huge Deccani force. That district had been entrusted to the charge of Najaf Khan, whose force was much inferior to the Maratha hosts who were reported to be 30,000 strong. Anxious to strike at the enemy before he could secure any advantage over the Khan, the General left Faizabad on 19th April, and hastened towards Kora in order to reinforce Najaf and bring the Wazir to a general action.

17. Shuja-ud-daulah in Ruhelkhand

After his retreat from Lucknow Shuja-ud-daulah had been flying for protection, beseeching aid now of the Ruhelas, now of the Bangashes, and then of the Marathas. Having failed twice, he believed that the task of overcoming the intrepid British was beyond his unaided strength, and hence this time he endeavoured to form a coalition of several important chiefs to drive out the English, whom he represented as cherishing designs on the Empire. Leaving Lucknow on 31st January, as we have seen, he took the road to Bareilly where Hafiz Rahmat Khan received him with apparent cordiality. But the Wazir's proposal for an offensive alliance against the foreign intruders met with an evasive reply[1] from this hoary Afghan politician, who would not risk a war with the victorious and mighty English for the sake of helping to reinstate an undesirable and grasping neighbour. But Shuja-ud-daulah would not be easily disappointed. Anxious to make his cause appear as the general cause of the Empire against the foreign intruders, he tried his best to organise a confederacy of as many Indian rulers as possible. With this object in view he left his family and treasure at Bareilly, guarded by Samru's disciplined brigade, and himself, attended by a small escort, marched to Anupshahr on the Ganga, where he saw some Maratha officers who promised him assistance. Having entered into an agreement with them,[2] the Wazir proceeded to Garh-Muktesar on

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1 Sair, II. 765-66 ; T. M., 250a ; Kalyan, 149b ; Haricharan, 463b. Gulistan, p. 86, is naturally silent.

2 Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 284 ; S. P. D., XXIX. L. 98 ; Haricharan 463b.

the Ganga, 32 miles above Anupshahr, to explore the possibilities of an alliance with Najib-ud-daulah, the supreme dictator at Delhi. When he arrived at Hasanpur, 30 miles short of the imperial city, he stopped there and wrote to Najib apprising him of his mission, and urging him to join the coalition, as the Emperor was now a tool in the hands of the English and it was therefore no rebellion to fight against him. The Wazir seems to have also proposed that Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul might be invited to head the confederacy, and the intermediary between the Wazir and Najib was the well-known Durrani agent, named Yaqub Khan, who had met Shuja-ud-daulah on 13th March. But nothing tangible came out of this mission, as Najib excused himself on the plea that he was too much occupied with the Jat war.[1]

The disappointed Wazir set out on his return march to Bareilly. On the bank of the Ganga at Garh-Muktesar, Anup Giri Gosain entitled Himmat Bahadur, demanded the pay of his *risala* which, owing to Shuja-ud-daulah's limited resources, did not come forth, and so he quitted the Nawab-Wazir's service to enter that of Jawahir Singh Jat of Bharatpur. M. Madec was also obliged to dismiss the greater part of his battalions who could no longer be paid regularly month by month, "and as the Prince (Shuja-ud-daulah) was no longer drawing any revenue from his country, he did not wish to deplete himself of the money which still remained with him in the situation in which he found himself."[2] Shuja-ud-daulah, returning to Bareilly, found the Ruhelas unfriendly and even plotting to attack the fugitive Wazir's small and dwindling retinue and plunder his treasure, or to capture and hand him over to the English. The Ruhelas as a whole looked upon Shuja-ud-daulah as their hereditary foe. Hence Sadullah Khan,[3] who was on friendly terms with the Wazir, advised

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1 Ghulam Ali, II. 210 ; Delhi Chronicle, 207 ; Imad, 97 ; T. M., 249a ; Ben. Sec. Cons., III. 298.

2 Haricharan, 463b ; Medec's Memoirs, II. pp. 4-5.

3 Khair-ud-din, p. 145. Gulistan, p. 86, and Imad, 97, say that it was Hafiz.

him to proceed to Farrukhabad and seek the assistance of Ahmad Khan Bangash, Hafiz Rahmat and Dunde, agreeing to follow him to the Bangash capital and act according to the decision they might arrive at there in consultation with the ruler of that place.

Shuja-ud-daulah readily accepted the advice, as a petty and private quarrel between a soldier in his retinue and a Pathan was about to develop in a big war in which most of the Ruhelas including Dunde Khan were likely to take part, and proceeded to Farrukhabad. Notwithstanding his long enmity with the ruling house of Awadh, the Bangash chief accorded a cordial welcome to the homeless Wazir and made suitable arrangements for the lodging and entertainment of Shuja-ud-daulah and his family, but he would not join the proposed confederacy on the ground of ill-health and lameness. Imad-ul-mulk, the ex-Wazir and dictator of three previous reigns, who had been living on the hospitality of Surajmal at Bharatpur but had migrated to Farrukhabad on the Jat Rajah's death under tragic circumstances, promised his support, and although his adhesion was not of much value, he being a Nawab without a country or an army, Shuja-ud-daulah thankfully accepted the offer. On the advice of this experienced though impoverished nobleman, he entered into an alliance with Malhar Rao Holkar to whom he had already sent frantic appeals for aid soon after his retreat from Baksar. Shuja-ud-daulah promised, as the price of Maratha assistance, the cession to Holkar of the *parganahs* which his father Safdar Jang had made over to him in 1752 but which had been re-occupied by the Wazir after the Maratha defeat at Panipat, besides a payment of fifteen lakhs of rupees in cash after their victory over the enemy; and as for the day-to-day expenses of the Maratha army, it was agreed that the Wazir would pay at the rate of 30,000 rupees per day.[1] The Wazir further promised to associate the Marathas with the administration of the Empire and manage its affairs in consultation with

[1] Khair-ud-din, 146, 153; Gentil, 240; Imad, 97; T. M., 250a; Sair, II. 267; S. P. D., XXIX. L. 98.

them. After this agreement had been made, Malhar Rao accompanied by Krishnaji (officer of Balaji, *amil* of Kalpi), with 30,000 troops set out from Malwa, and a little later Shuja-ud-daulah also began his march with Imad-ul-mulk, but without any of the Ruhela chieftains who evaded joining him on one pretext or another, and both proceeded in the direction of Kora Jahanabad with as much expedition as possible.

18. The Battle of Kora, 3rd May, 1765

Proceeding by way of Bithur and Jajmau, the allied army arrived in the neighbourhood of Kora sometime in the third week of April, 1765, and invaded this town of medieval importance, situated about 24 miles south of the modern city of Kanpur. Mirza Najaf Khan, *faujdar* of the district, with his tiny force of 6 to 7 thousand men assisted by two battalions of sepoys in the Company's service, was literally overwhelmed by the Maratha myriads. Yet he erected an entrenchment and following defensive tactics, fought as bravely as circumstances permitted him to do. The Marathas plundered the territory round Jahanabad, which lies near Kora, cut off Najaf's communications and food supplies and compelled him to sue for peace. He agreed to surrender and see the Wazir through Fatah Ali Khan Durrani, who became responsible for the successful termination of the negotiations.[1] Shuja-ud-daulah cordially welcomed the Mirza, who apparently became a partisan of the allies.

Najaf Khan's surrender was at the time taken by the Fort William authorities to be a voluntary desertion of the English and immediate steps were taken to guard against its consequences and to prevent defection on the part of other Indian chiefs. The weight of evidence leads us to the conclusion that Najaf Khan's submission to the Wazir was but a clever feint to save his head from imminent danger. He knew Shuja-ud-daulah's character too well to have thought of casting in his lot permanently with him, and he was shrewd enough to have seen the rottenness of the Wazir's new and hastily raised militia

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1 Khair-ud-din 153-54 ; S. P. D., XXIX. L. 98.

and of the want of cordiality between the latter and his allies the Marathas. The Wazir's counsel no less than his action was hampered by the absence of unanimity among the allies. Malhar Rao's pride seemed to have increased with age. An anecdote is on record that one day Shuja-ud-daulah paid the Maratha chief a visit, while he was playing at chess. Far from rising to receive the visitor, Holkar even ignored the Nawab-Wazir's presence and went on with the game. Pretending not to mind the breach of etiquette, the Wazir made some humorous remarks, whereupon Malhar demanded the sixty (?) lakhs of rupees promised by the former. Shuja-ud-daulah being hurt by the Maratha chief's pride and insolence, desired to have peace with the English. He consulted Najaf Khan who liked nothing better, and it was decided to send the Mirza and Monsieur Gentil to the British camp to negotiate terms. By this time General Carnac had advanced to the neighbourhood of Kora and Najaf Khan, abandoning his mission, went over and rejoined the English army on 30th April. Although Carnac and some other officers had suspected Najaf's fidelity for some time, they seemed to have been eventually convinced that he would not repeat his mistake. The peace negotiations started by Gentil came to nought owing to the presence of Najaf Khan with the French envoy.[1]

By this time Brigadier-General Carnac with the main body of the British army had arrived in the vicinity of Kora Jahanabad. On the receipt of the news of the Maratha movement he had left Faizabad, joined Major Stibbert's battalion near Kundia Nala on 19th April, and commenced his march towards the Doab. Proceeding by way of Rai Bareli, the army crossed the Ganga at the ferry of Daundia-Khera, 25 miles south-east of Kanpur, on 27th April. That day Captain Graham had "a smart skirmish" with a disaffected *zamindar* of the neighbourhood, probably the *taulqdar* of Daundia-Khera. Fighting bravely to the end in the cause of his fugitive liege-lord, the valiant landlord was defeated and

[1] Khair-ud-din, 155 ; Ghulam Ali, II. 211 ; Ben. Sec. Com. Progs. of 1765, p. 19 ; Gentil, 240-41.

slain with many of his followers, though the English too sustained a heavy loss. Two days after this, Carnac set up his encampment at Sheorajpur on the Ganga, opposite to Daundia-Khera (29th), from where Kora was only 14 miles away. Mirza Najaf Khan, who was deputed by the Wazir to re-commence peace talk, rejoined the British army on the very day after their arrival at Sheorajpur. On 3rd May, the English began their march towards Kora, and as their advance-guard under Robert Fletcher approached the neighbourhood of that town, it was attacked by a body of fleet Maratha horse who, being adepts in irregular warfare, surrounded the rear of Fletcher's division, inflicted some loss and plundered much of the baggage. Shitab Rai was almost completely hemmed in, but as he was not a mere diplomatist but a talented soldier also, he succeeded in cutting his way through the enemy's ranks.[1] Just then Najaf Khan, rushing forward, made a sudden charge and forced the Marathas to surrender their booty. Meanwhile the English succeeded in re-arranging their lines, and the parties now engaged in a distant artillery duel. Holkar's men, though numerically superior, could not stand the close and steady fire from the British guns, and a few rounds speedily threw their ranks into confusion. Without waiting to reply, the Marathas drew off and retreated in disorder towards Kalpi. A general panic among his troops having exasperated Malhar Rao, he called out to his men, "Set down my palanquin here, and I would like to be slain. The troops of the Nawab (Shuja-ud-daulah) having made undue haste, caused destruction to my army, also. I should have fought in my own way." Shuja-ud-daulah's men fared on better and being confounded at the Maratha defeat and flight, he with Imad-ul-mulk rode up to the front where Malhar was standing and dissuaded the Maratha chief from throwing himself deliberately into the fire.[2] The three chiefs now retreated precipitately, the two Nawabs towards Farrukhabad and Holkar

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1 Sec. Com. Progs. of 1765, p. 18. Sair II. 768; Kalyan, 150a.

2 Imad, p. 97.

in the direction of Kalpi. The English began the pursuit of the fugitives without delay, and Major Fletcher, anxious to capture the Wazir, exerted himself as much as he could. But accompanied by a small body of his well-mounted followers, Shuja-ud-daulah managed to give his pursuers the slip and got out of their reach. The Wazir, Imad-ul-mulk and the Marathas had in the hurry of flight left most of their baggage and equipage in the field, all of which now became the property of the victors.[1]

19. Shuja-ud-daulah decides to throw himself on the English mercy

In pursuit of the fugitive army a part of the British force under Major Fletcher arrived at Jajmau, and here they remained encamped for a few days. Near this place was situated a fortalice with a garrison of 14 men all told. Captain Swinton insulted the commandant of the fortalice and on his refusal to surrender it except on honourable terms, struck him and the result was a free fight between the parties. This literally handful of brave men fought with splendid gallantry and dash and repulsed Swinton's men. Presently Swinton was re-inforced by a detachment from Fletcher's army, and even then the fort could not be captured till nearly all the members of the garrison had perished fighting bravely. The English lost more than double the number of the garrison in killed and considerably more in wounded.[2]

Meanwhile, the Marathas who had not been pursued re-appeared in the Doab and proceeded towards Jajmau, where was encamped the main division of the British army. On 15th May, Major Fletcher was sent to hound them out of the

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[1] For the battle see—Ghulam Ali, II. 211-13 ; M. L., 87-88 ; Haricharan, 464a ; Khair-ud-din, 154-58 ; Sair, II. 768 ; T.M., 250a & b ; Kalyan, 149b-150b ; Imad, 97-98 ; S.P.D., XXIX. 90 & 98 ; Gentil, 241 ; Madec, 5 ; Carnac's letter to Calcutta Board, dated 3rd May, 1765, vide Ben. Sec. Bom. Progs. of 1st June, 1765, Vol. I. p. 19 ; Broome, I. 512-14.

[2] Broome, 514.

Doab, and on the 22nd an action took place near Kalpi in which the Marathas again suffered defeat, as a result of which they retreated beyond that region.[1]

The action at Kora on 3rd May, 1765, and the subsequent one at Kalpi, were not battles, not even well-matched skirmishes; they were mere routs. Shuja-ud-daulah had hoped that his Maratha allies would be able to turn the tide of the conflict in his favour; but he was sadly disappointed. "The mere presence of his enemies," writes Madec who was present at Kora, "routed his troops almost without a fight, and the allies abandoned him." Although at the time of his retreat from the field of Kora, Shuja-ud-daulah still cherished the idea of recommencing the struggle and promised Malhar Rao to return in eight days with the Ruhela army,[2] he realised on reaching Farrukhabad that it was utterly useless to try his luck with a handful of mercenaries. Having met with an indifferent reception from Ahmad Khan Bangash, Hafiz Rahmat Khan and other Ruhelas, who were not in the least willing to make a common cause with him, Shuja-ud-daulah's hopes were now shattered and his spirits were completely broken. He turned his attention once more to obtaining terms, and this time by throwing himself absolutely at the mercy of the English. The final struggle was thus over, and with it ended the first part of the story of Shuja-ud-daulah's reign.

[1] Khair-ud-din, 159.
[2] Madec's Memoirs, II. p. 5; S. P. D., Vol. XXIX. 98.

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(b) *Some of the published documents of the E. I. Co.* :

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